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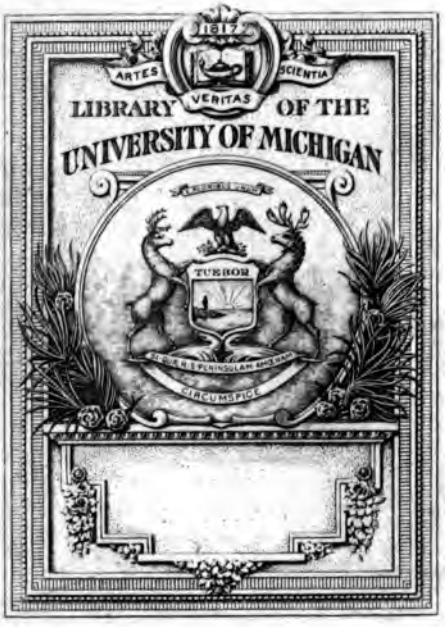
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THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

CONTAINING

THE COMMISSARY,
THE LAME LOVER,
THE BANKRUPT,
THE COZENERS,
THE MAID OF BATH,
THE DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS,
THE NABOB,
A TRIP TO CALAIS, AND
THE CAPUCHIN.

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1799.

THE

COMMISSARY;

A COMEDY,

IN

THREE ACTS.

Queis facile eſt ædem conducere flumina portus,
Siccandum eluviem, portandum ad buſta cadaver.
Juv. Sat. III.

Criminibus debent hortos, prætoria, menſas,
Argentum vetus, et ſtantem extra pocula Caprum.
Ibid. Sat. I.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr Zac. Fungus, —	Mr FOOTE.
Mr Iſaac Fungus, —	Mr COSTOLLO.
Mr Gruel, —	Mr SHUTER.
Young Loveit, —	Mr DAVIS.
Dr Catgut, —	Mr PARSONS.
Simon, — —	Mr PRESTON.
Mr Bridoun, —	Mr GARDNER.
Mr Paduaſoy, —	Mr KEEN.
Mr Harpy, —	Mr TINDAL.
La Fleur, —	Mr JOHNSON.
John, — —	Mr MARSHALL.
A Hackney-Coachman,	Mr PARSONS.
Mrs Mechlin, —	Miſs CHENEY.
Mrs Loveit, —	Mr SHUTER.
Dolly, — —	Miſs REYNOLDS.
Jenny, —	Mrs GRANGER.

ACT

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Mrs Mechlin's Houſe.*

(Loud knocking at the Door.)

Enter Jenny.

Jen. RAP, rap, rap, up-ſtairs and down, from morning to night; if this ſame commiſſary ſtays much longer amongſt us, my miſtreſs muſt e'en hire a porter. Who's there?

Simon *without.*

Sim. Is Mrs Mechlin at home?

Jen. No. *(opens the door.)* Oh, what is it you, Simon.

Enter Simon.

Sim. At your ſervice, ſweet Mrs Jane.

Jen. Why, you knock with authority; and what are your commands, Maſter Simon?

Sim. I come, Madam, to receive thoſe of your miſtreſs. What, Jenny, has ſhe any great affair on the anvil? Her ſummons is moſt exceedingly preſſing; and you need not be told, child, that a man of my conſequence does not trouble himſelf about trifles.

Jen. Oh, Sir, I know very well you principal actors don't perform every night.

Sim. Mighty well, Ma'am, but notwithſtanding your ironical ſneer, it is not every man that will do for your miſtreſs; her agents muſt have genius and parts: I don't ſuppoſe, in the whole bills of mortality, there is ſo general and extenſive a dealer as my friend Mrs Mechlin.

Jen. Why, to be ſure, we have plenty of cuſtomers; and for various kinds of commodities it would be pretty difficult, I fancy, to——

Sim. Commodities! your humble ſervant, ſweet Mrs Jane: yes, yes, you have various kinds of commodities, indeed.

Jen. Mr Simon, I don't underſtand you; I ſuppoſe it is no ſecret in what ſort of goods our dealing conſiſts.

Sim. No, no, they are pretty well known.

Jen.

Jen. And to be ſure, though now and then, to oblige a cuſtomer, my miſtreſs does condeſcend to ſmuggle a little—

Sim. Keep it up, Mrs Jane.

Jen. Yet there are no people in the liberty of Weſtminſter that live in more credit than we do.

Sim. Bravo.

Jen. The very beſt of quality are not aſham'd to viſit my miſtreſs.

Sim. They have reaſon.

Jen. Reſpected by the neighbours.

Sim. I know it.

Jen. Punctual in her payments.

Sim. To a moment.

Jen. Regular hours.

Sim. Doubtleſs.

Jen. Never miſſes the ſarmant on Sundays.

Sim. I own it.

Jen. Not an oath comes out of her mouth, unleſs, now and then, when the poor gentlewoman happens to be overtaken in liquor.

Sim. Granted.

Jen. Not at all given to lying, but, like other tradeſfolks, in the way of her buſineſs.

Sim. Very well.

Jen. Very well! then pray, Sir, what wou'd you inſinuate? Look you, Mr Simon, don't go to caſt reflections upon us; don't think to blaſt the reputation of our——

Sim. Hark ye, Jenny, are you ſerious?

Jen. Serious! ay, marry am I.

Sim. The devil you are!

Jen. Upon my word, Mr Simon, you ſhou'd not give your tongue ſuch a licence; let me tell you, theſe airs don't become you at all.

Sim. Hey-day! why, where the deuce have I got; ſure I have miſtaken the houſe; is not this Mrs Mechlin's?

Jen. That's pretty well known.

Sim. The commodious, convenient Mrs Mechlin, at the ſign of the ſtar, in the pariſh of St Paul's?

Jen. Bravo.

Sim. That commercial caterpillar?

Jen. I know it.

Sim. That murderer of manufactures?

Jen. Doubtleſs.

Sim.

Sim. That walking warehouſe?

Jen. Granted.

Sim. That carries about a greater cargo of contraband goods under her petticoats than a Calais cutter?

Jen. Very well.

Sim. That engroſſer and ſeducer of virgins?

Jen. Keep it up, Maſter Simon.

Sim. That foreſtaller of bagnios?

Jen. Incomparable fine.

Sim. That canting, couzening, money-lending, match-making, pawnbroking—[*Loud knocking.*]

Jen. Mighty well, Sir, here comes my miſtreſs, ſhe ſhall thank you for the pretty picture you have been pleaſed to draw.

Sim. Nay, but dear Jenny——

Jen. She ſhall be told how highly ſhe ſtands in your favour.

Sim. But, my ſweet girl—[*Knocking again.*]

Jen. Let me go, Mr Simon, don't you hear?

Sim. And can you have the heart to ruin me at once!

Jen. Hands off.

Sim. A peace, a peace, my dear Mrs Jane, and dictate the articles.

Enter Mrs Mechlin, *followed by a hackney coachman, with ſeveral bundles, in a capuchin, a bonnet, and her cloaths pinned up.*

Mrs Mech. So, huſſey, what, muſt I ſtay all day in the ſtreets? who have we here! the devil's in the wenches, I think,—one of your fellows, I ſuppoſe——Oh, is it you! how fares it, Simon?

Jen. Madam, you ſhould not have waited a minute, but Mr Simon—

Sim. Huſh, huſh! you barbarous jade—

Jen. Knowing your knock, and eager to open the door, flew up ſtairs, fell over the landing-place, and quite barr'd up the way.

Sim. Yes, and I am afraid I have put out my ankle. Thanks, Jenny; you ſhall be no loſer, you ſlut.

Mrs Mech. Poor Simon.——Oh, Lord have mercy upon me, what a round have I taken!——Is the wench petrified, why don't you reach me a chair, don't you ſee I'm tired to death?

Jen.

Jen. Indeed, Ma'am, you'll kill yourſelf.

Sim. Upon my word, Ma'am Mechlin, you ſhou'd take a little care of yourſelf; indeed you labour too hard.

Mrs Mech. Ay, Simon, and for little or nothing: only victuals and cloaths, more coſt than worſhip. Why does not the wench take the things from the fellow? Well, what's your fare?

Coachm. Miſtreſs, it's honeſtly worth half a crown.

Mrs Mech. Give him a couple of ſhillings and ſend him away.

Coachm. I hope you'll tip me the teſter to drink.

Mrs Mech. Them there fellows are never contented; drink! ſtand farther off; why, you ſmell already as ſtrong as a beer-barrel.

Coachm. Miſtreſs, that's becauſe I have already been drinking.

Mrs Mech. And are not you aſhamed, you ſot, to be eternally guzzling! You had better buy you ſome cloaths.

Coachm. No, Miſtreſs, my honour won't let me do that.

Mrs Mech. Your honour! and pray how does that hinder you.

Coachm. Why, when a good gentlewoman like you, cries, Here, coachman, here's ſomething to drink—

Mrs Mech. Well!

Coachm. Wou'd it be honour in me to lay it out in any thing elſe? No, Miſtreſs, my conſcience won't let me, becauſe why, it's the will of the donor, you know.

Mrs Mech. Did you ever hear ſuch a blockhead?

Coachm. No, no, Miſtreſs; though I am a poor man, I won't forfeit my honour; my cattle, tho'f I love 'em, poor beaſteſſes, are not more dearer to me than that.

Mrs Mech. Yes, you and your horſes give pretty ſtrong proofs of your love and your honour; for you have no cloaths on your back, and they have no fleſh. Well, Jenny, give him the ſixpence; there, there, lay it out as you will.

Coachm. It will be to your health, Miſtreſs; it ſhall melt at the Meuſe, before I go home; I ſhall be careful to clear my conſcience.

Mrs Mech. I don't doubt it.

Coachm. You need not. Miſtreſs, your ſervant.

[*Exit coachman.*

Mrs Mech. Has there been any body here, Jenny?

Jen.

Jen. The gentleman, Ma'am, about the Glouceſterſhire living.

Mrs Mech. He has, oh ho! what, I ſuppoſe his ſtomach's come down. Does he like the incumbrance? will he marry the party?

Jen. Why, that article ſeems to go a little againſt him.

Mrs Mech. Does it ſo? then let him retire to his Cumberland curacy: that's a fine keen air, it will ſoon give him an appetite. He'll ſtick to his honour too, till his caſſock is wore to a rag.

Jen. Why, indeed, Ma'am, it ſeems pretty ruſty already.

Mrs Mech. Deviliſh ſqueamiſh, I think; a good fat living, and a fine woman into the bargain! You told him a friend of the lady's will take the child off her hands?—

Jen. Yes, Madam.

Mrs Mech. So that the affair will be a ſecret to all but himſelf. But he muſt quickly reſolve, for next week his wife's month will be up.

Jen. He promiſed to call about four.

Mrs Mech. But don't let him think we are at a loſs for a huſband; there is to my knowledge a merchant's clerk in the city, a comely young man, and comes of good friends, that will take her with but a ſmall place in the cuſtom-houſe.

Jen. He ſhall know it.

Mrs Mech. Ay, and tell him, that the party's party has intereſt enough to obtain it whenever he will. And then the bridegroom may put the purchaſe-money too of that ſame preſentation into his pocket.

Jen. Truly, Ma'am, I ſhould think this would prove the beſt match for the lady.

Mrs Mech. Who doubts it?—Here, Jenny, carry theſe things above ſtairs. Take care of the cigrette, leave the watch upon the table, and be ſure you don't miſlay the pearl necklace; the lady goes to Mrs Cornellys's to-night, and if ſhe has any luck, ſhe will be ſure to redeem it to-morrow.

[*Exit* Jenny.

Sim. What a world of affairs! it is a wonder, Madam, how you are able to remember them all.

Mrs Mech. Trifles, mere trifles, Maſter Simon. But I have a great affair in hand—ſuch an affair, if well managed, it will be the making of us all.

Sim. If I, Ma'am, can be of the leaſt uſe——

Mrs Mech. Of the higheſt! there is no doing without you.—You know the great——

Jen. I have put the things where you ordered, Ma'am.

Mrs Mech. Very well, you may go. [*Exit* Jenny.] I ſay, you know the great commiſſary, that is come to lodge in my houſe. Now they ſay this Mr Fungus is as rich as an Indian governor. Heaven knows how he came by it: but that, you know, is no buſineſs of ours. Pretty pickings, I warrant, abroad. [*Loud knocking.*] Who the deuce can that be? but let it be who it will, you muſt not go till I ſpeak to you.

Enter Jenny.

Jen. The widow Loveit, Ma'am.

Mrs Mech. What, the old liquoriſh dowager from Devonſhire Square? ſhew her in. [*Exit* Jenny.] You'll wait in the kitchen, Simon; I ſhall ſoon diſpatch her affair.

[*Exit* Simon.

Enter Mrs Loveit.

Mrs Lov. So, ſo, good morning to you, good Mrs Mechlin. John, let the coach wait at the corner.

Mrs Mech. You had better ſit here, Madam.

Mrs Lov. Any where. Well, my dear woman, I hope you have not forgot your old friend—ugh, ugh, ugh,—[*coughs.*] Conſider I have no time to loſe, and you are always ſo full of employment.

Mrs Mech. Forgot you! you ſhall judge Mrs Loveit. I have, Ma'am, provided a whole cargo of huſbands for you, of all nations, complexions, ages, tempers, and ſizes: ſo you ſee you have nothing to do but to chuſe.

Mrs Lov. To chuſe! Mrs Mechlin; Lord help me, what choice can I have? I look upon wedlock to be a kind of a lottery, and I have already drawn my prize; and a great one it was! my poor dear man that's gone, I ſhall never meet with his fellow.

Mrs Mech. 'Pſhaw! Madam, don't let us trouble our heads about him, it's high time that he was forgot.

Mrs Lov. But won't his relations think me rather too quick.

Mrs Mech. Not a jot; the greateſt compliment you could pay to his memory; it is a proof he gave you reaſon

to

to be fond of the ſtate. But what do you mean by quick! why he has been bury'd theſe three weeks—

Mrs Lov. And three days, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Indeed! quite an age!

Mrs Lov. Yes; but I ſhall never forget him; ſleeping, or waking, he's always before me. His dear ſwell'd belly, and his poor ſhrunk legs. Lord bleſs me, Mrs Mechlin, he had no more calf than my fan.

Mrs Mech. No!

Mrs Lov. No, indeed; and then, his bit of a purple noſe, and his little weezen face as ſharp as a razor—don't mention it, I can never forget him. [*Cries.*]

Mrs Mech. Sweet marks of remembrance, indeed. But, Ma'am, if you continue to be ſo fond of your laſt huſband, what makes you think of another?

Mrs Lov. Why, what can I do, Mrs Mechlin? a poor lone widow woman as I am; there's no body minds me; my tenants behind-hand, my ſervants all careleſs, my children undutiful—ugh, ugh, ugh—[*coughs.*]

Mrs Mech. You have a villainous cough, Mrs Loveit; ſhall I ſend for ſome lozenges?

Mrs Lov. No, I thank you, it's nothing at all; mere habit, juſt a little trick I've got.

Mrs Mech. But I wonder you ſhou'd have all theſe vexations to plague you, Madam, you, who are ſo rich, and ſo—

Mrs Lov. Forty thouſand in the four per cents. every morning I riſe, Mrs Mechlin, beſides two houſes at Hackney; but then my affairs are ſo weighty and intricate; there is ſuch tricking in lawyers, and ſuch torments in children, that I can't do by myſelf; I muſt have a helpmate; quite neceſſity, no matter of choice.

Mrs Mech. Oh, I underſtand you, you marry merely for convenience; juſt only to get an aſſiſtant, a kind of a guard, a fence to your property?

Mrs Lov. Nothing elſe.

Mrs Mech. I thought ſo; quite prudential; ſo that age is none of your object? you don't want a ſcampering, giddy, ſprightly, young—

Mrs Lov. Young! Heaven forbid. What, do you think, like ſome ladies I know, that I want to have my huſband taken for one of my grand-children! No, no; thank Heaven, ſuch vain thoughts never enter'd my head.

Mrs Mech.

Mrs Mech. But yet, as your matters ſtand, he ought not to be ſo very old neither; for inſtance now, of what uſe to you wou'd be a huſband of ſixty.

Mrs Lov. Sixty! are you mad, Mrs Mechlin, what do think I want to turn nurſe?

Mrs Mech. Or fifty-five?

Mrs Lov. Ugh, ugh, ugh—

Mrs Mech. Or fifty?

Mrs Lov. Oh! that's too cunning an age; men, now-a-days, rarely marry at fifty, they are too knowing and cautious.

Mrs Mech. Or forty-five, or forty, or—

Mrs Lov. Shall I, Mrs Mechlin, tell you a piece of my mind?

Mrs Mech. I believe, Ma'am, that will be your beſt way.

Mrs Lov. Why, then, as my children are young and rebellious, the way to ſecure and preſerve their obedience, will be to marry a man that won't grow old in a hurry.

Mrs Mech. Why I thought you declar'd againſt youth?

Mrs Lov. So I do, ſo I do; but then, ſix or ſeven and twenty is not ſo very young, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. No, no, a pretty ripe age; for at that time of life, men can buſtle and ſtir, they are not eaſily check'd, and whatever they take in hand they go through with.

Mrs Lov. True, true.

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, it is then they may be ſaid to be uſeful; it is the only tear and wear ſeaſon.

Mrs Lov. Right, right.

Mrs Mech. Well, Ma'am, I ſee what you want, and to-morrow about this time, if you'll do me the favour to call—

Mrs Lov. I ſhan't fail.

Mrs Mech. I think I can ſuit you.

Mrs Lov. You'll be very obliging.

Mrs Mech. You may depend upon't I'll do my endeavours.

Mrs Lov. But, Mrs Mechlin, be ſure don't let him be older than that, not above ſeven or eight and twenty at moſt; and let it be as ſoon as you conveniently can.

Mrs Mech. Never fear, Ma'am.

Mrs Lov. Becauſe, you know the more children I have by

by the ſecond venter, the greater plague I ſhall prove to thoſe I had by the firſt.

Mrs Mech. True, Ma'am. You had better lean on me to the door; but indeed, Mrs Loveit, you are very malicious to your children, very revengeful, indeed.

Mrs Lov. Ah, they deſerve it, you can't think what ſad whelps they turn out; no puniſhment can be too much; if their poor father cou'd but have foreſeen they wou'd have—why did I mention the dear man! it melts me too much. Well peace be with him. To-morrow about this time, Mrs Mechlin, will the party be here, think you?

Mrs Mech. I can't ſay.

Mrs Lov. Well, a good day, good Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Here, John, take care of your miſtreſs.—[*Exit* Mrs Loveit.] A good morning to you, Ma'am. Jenny, bid Simon come up. A huſband! there now is a proof of the prudence of age; I wonder they don't add a clauſe to the act to prevent the old from marrying clandeſtinely as well as the young. I am ſure there are as many unſuitable matches at this time of life as the other.

Enter Simon.

Shut the door, Simon. Are there any of Mr Fungus's ſervants below?

Sim. Three or four ſtrange faces.

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, ſome of that troop I ſuppoſe; come, Simon, be ſeated. Well, Simon, as I was telling you, this Mr Fungus, my lodger above, that has brought home from the wars a whole cart-load of money, and who (between you and I) went there from very little better than a driver of carts—

Sim. I formerly knew him, Ma'am.

Mrs Mech. But he does not know you?

Sim. No, no.

Mrs Mech. I am glad of that—this ſpark, I ſay, not content with being really as rich as a lord, is determin'd to rival them too in every other accompliſhment.

Sim. Will that be ſo eaſy? why he muſt be upwards of—

Mrs Mech. Fifty, I warrant.

Sim. Rather late in life to ſet up for a gentleman.

Mrs Mech. But fine talents, you know, and a ſtrong inclination—

Sim. That, indeed—

Mrs Mec

Mrs Mech. Then I promiſe you he ſpares for no pains.

Sim. Diligent?

Mrs Mech. Oh, always at it. Learning ſomething or other from morning to night; my houſe is a perfect academy, ſuch a throng of fencers, dancers, riders, muſicians;—but, however, to ſweeten the pill, I have a fellow-feeling for recommending the teachers.

Sim. No doubt, Ma'am; that's always the rule.

Mrs Mech. But one of his ſtudies is really diverting; I own I can't help laughing at that.

Sim. What may that be?

Mrs Mech. Oratory.—You muſt know his firſt ambition is to have a ſeat in a certain aſſembly; and in order to appear there with credit, Mr What-d'ye-Call'em, the man from the city, attends every morning to give him a lecture upon ſpeaking, and there is ſuch haranguing and bellowing between them—Lord have mercy upon—but you'll ſee enough on't yourſelf; for do you know, Simon, you are to be his valet de chambre?

Sim. Me, Madam!

Mrs Mech. Ay, his privy counſellor, his confidant, his director in chief.

Sim. To what end will that anſwer?

Mrs Mech. There I am coming. You are to know, that our 'Squire Wou'd-be is violently bent upon matrimony; and nothing forſooth will go down but a perſon of rank and condition.

Sim. Ay, ay, for that piece of pride he's indebted to Germany.

Mrs Mech. The article of fortune he holds in utter contempt; a grand alliance is all that he wants; ſo that the lady has but her veins full of high blood, he does not care two-pence how low and empty her purſe is.

Sim. But, Ma'am, won't it be difficult to meet with a ſuitable ſubject? I believe there are few ladies of quality that—

Mrs Mech. Oh, as to that, I am already provided.

Sim. Indeed!

Mrs Mech. You know my niece Dolly?

Sim. Very well.

Mrs Mech. What think you of her?

Sim. Of Miſs Dolly, for what?

Mrs Mech.

Mrs Mech. For what! you are plaguily dull: why a woman of faſhion, you dunce.

Sim. To be ſure Miſs Dolly is very deſerving, and few ladies have a better appearance; but, bleſs me, Madam, here people of rank are ſo generally known, that the ſlighteſt enquiry wou'd poiſon your project.

Mrs Mech. Oh, Simon, I have no fear from that quarter; there I think I am pretty ſecure.

Sim. If that, indeed, be the caſe—

Mrs Mech. In the firſt place, Mr Fungus has an entire reliance on me.

Sim. That's ſomething.

Mrs Mech. Then to baffle an idle curioſity, we are not derived from any of your new-fangled gentry, who owe their upſtart nobility to your Harry's and Edward's. No, no, we are ſcions from an older ſtock; we are the hundred and fortieth lineal deſcendant from Hercules Alexander, Earl of Glendowery, prime miniſter to King Malcolm the Firſt.

Sim. Odſo! a qualification for a canon of Straſbourg. So then it ſeems you are tranſplanted from the banks of the Tweed; cry you mercy! But how will Miſs Dolly be able to manage the accent?

Mrs Mech. Very well; ſhe was two years an actreſs in Edenborough.

Sim. That's true; is the overture made, has there been any interview?

Mrs Mech. Several; we have no diſlike to his perſon; can't but own he is rather agreeable; and as to his propoſals they are greater than we cou'd deſire: but we are prudent and careful, ſay nothing without the Earl's approbation.

Sim. Oh, that will be eaſily had.

Mrs Mech. Not ſo eaſily; and now comes your part: but firſt, how goes the world with you, Simon?

Sim. Never worſe! the ten bags of tea, and the cargo of brandy, them peering raſcals took from me in Suſſex, has quite broken my back.

Mrs Mech. Poor Simon! why then I am afraid there's an end of your traffick.

Sim. Totally: for now thoſe fellows have got the Iſle of Man in their hands, I have no chance to get home, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech.

Mrs Mech. Then you are entirely at leiſure.

Sim. As a Bath turnſpit in the month of July.

Mrs Mech. You are then, Simon, an old family ſervant in waiting here on the lady; but diſpatch'd to the north with a view to negotiate the treaty, you are juſt returned with the noble Peer's reſolution. Prepare you a ſuitable equipage, I will provide you with a couple of letters, one for the lover and one for the lady—

Sim. The contents—

Mrs Mech. Oh, you may read them within: now with regard to any queſtions, I will furniſh you with ſuitable anſwers; but you have a bungler to deal with, ſo your cards will be eaſily play'd.

Enter Jenny.

Jen. Miſs Dolly, Ma'am, in a hackney coach at the corner; may ſhe come in?

Mrs Mech. Are the ſervants out of the way?

Jen. Oh, ſhe is ſo muffled up and diſguiſed, that ſhe'll run no danger from them.

Mrs Mech. Be ſure keep good watch at the door, Jenny.

Jen. Oh, never fear, Ma'am. [*Exit* Jenny.

Mrs Mech. Simon, take thoſe two letters that are under the furthermoſt cuſhion in the window, run home, get a dirty pair of boots on, a great coat, and a whip, and be here with them in half an hour at fartheſt.

Sim. I will not fail. But have you no farther directions?

Mrs Mech. Time enough. I ſhall be in the way; for it is me that muſt introduce you above. [*Exit* Simon.] So things ſeem now in a pretty good train; a few hours, it is to be hoped, will make me eaſy for life. To ſay truth, I begin to be tir'd of my trade. To be ſure the profits are great; but then, ſo are the riſks that I run: beſides, my private practice begins to be ſmoak'd. Ladies are ſuppos'd to come here with different deſigns than merely to look at my goods; ſome of my beſt cuſtomers too, are got out of my channel, and manage their matters at home by their maids. Thoſe aſylums, they gave a dreadful blow to my buſineſs. Time has been, when a gentleman wanted a friend, I could ſupply him with choice in an hour; but the market is ſpoiled, and a body might as ſoon procure a hare or a partridge as a pretty—[*Enter* Dolly.]—So niece, are all

all things prepar'd? have you got the papers from Harpy?

Dolly. Here they are, Ma'am.

Mrs Mech. Let me ſee—Oh the marriage articles for Fungus to ſign. Have you got the contract about you?

Dolly. You know, aunt, I left it with you.

Mrs Mech. True, I had forgot: but where is the bond that I—here it is; this, Dolly, you muſt ſign and ſeal before witneſſes.

Dolly. To what end, aunt?

Mrs Mech. Only, child, a trifling acknowledgment for all the trouble I have taken; a little hint to your huſband, that he may reimburſe your poor aunt, for your cloaths, board, lodging, and breeding.

Dolly. I hope my aunt does not ſuſpect that I can ever be wanting—

Mrs Mech. No, my dear, not in the leaſt: but it is beſt, Polly, in order to prevent all retroſpection, that we ſettle accounts before you change your condition.

Dolly. But, Ma'am, may not I ſee the contents?

Mrs Mech. The contents, love, of what uſe will that be to you? Sign and ſeal, that's enough.

Dolly. But, aunt, I chuſe to ſee what I ſign.

Mrs Mech. To ſee! what then you ſuſpect me?

Dolly. No, Ma'am; but a little caution—

Mrs Mech. Caution! Here's an impudent baggage! How dare you diſpute my commands? Have not I made you, raiſed you from nothing, and won't a word from my mouth reduce you again?

Dolly. Madam, I—

Mrs Mech. Anſwer me, huſſy, was not you a beggar's brat at my door; did not I, out of compaſſion, take you into my houſe, call you my niece, and give you ſuitable breeding?

Dolly. True, Madam.

Mrs Mech. And what return did you make me? You had ſcarce entered into your teens, you forward ſlut, but you brought me a child almoſt as big as yourſelf; and a delightful father you choſe for it! Doctor Catgut, the meagre muſician; that ſick monkey-face maker of crotchets; that eternal trotter after all the little draggle-tail'd girls of town. Oh, you low ſlut, had it been by a gentleman, it would not have vex'd me; but a fidler!

Dolly. For heaven's ſake—

Mrs Mech. After that you eloped, commenc'd ſtroller, and in a couple of years returned to town in your original trim, with ſcarce a rag to your back.

Dolly. Pray, Ma'am—

Mrs Mech. Did not I, notwithſtanding, receive you again? have not I tortured my brains for your good? found you a huſband as rich as a Jew, juſt brought all my matters to bear, and now you refuſe to ſign a paltry paper?

Dolly. Pray, Madam, give it me, I will ſign, execute, do all that you bid me.

Mrs Mech. You will; yes, ſo you had beſt. And what's become of the child, have you done as I ordered?

Dolly. The Doctor was not at home; but the nurſe left the child in the kitchen.

Mrs Mech. You heard nothing from him?

Dolly. Not a word.

Mrs Mech. Then he is meditating ſome miſchief, I warrant. However, let our good ſtars ſecure us to-day, and a fig for what may happen to-morrow. It is a little unlucky, tho', that Mr Fungus has choſen the Doctor for his maſter of muſic; but as yet he has not been here, and, if poſſible, we muſt prevent him.

Enter Jenny, *haſtily.*

Jen. Mr Fungus, the tallow-chandler, Ma'am, is croſſing the way, ſhall I ſay you are at home?

Mrs Mech. His brother has ſervants enough, let ſome of them anſwer. Hide, Dolly. [*Exit* Dolly *and* Jenny.] —[*One knock at the door.*]—Ay, that's the true tap of the trader; this old brother of ours tho' is ſmoky and ſhrewd, and tho' an odd, a ſenſible fellow; we muſt guard againſt him: if he gets but an inkling, but the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion, our project is marr'd.—[*A noiſe without.*]—What the deuce is the matter! As I live a ſquabble between him and La Fleur, the French footman we hir'd this morning. This may make mirth, I'll liſten a little. [*Retires.*

Enter Mr Iſaac Fungus, *driving in* La Fleur.

I. Fung. What, is there no-body in the houſe than can give me an anſwer; where's my brother, you raſcal?

La Fleur. Je n' entend pas.

I. Fung. Pas, what the devil is that; anſwer yes or no, is

is my brother at home; don't ſhrug up your ſhoulders at me, you——Oh, here comes a rational being.—

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Madam Mechlin, how fares it? this here lanthorn-jaw'd raſcal won't give me an anſwer, and indeed wou'd ſcarce let me into the houſe.

La Fleur. C'ſt gros Bourgois a fait une tapage de diable.

Mrs Mech. Fy donc c'eſt le frere de monſieur.

La Fleur. Le frere! Mon Dieu!

I. Fung. What is all this? what the devil linguo is the fellow a talking?

Mrs Mech. This is a footman from France that your brother has taken.

I. Fung. From France! and is that the beſt of his breeding? I thought we had taught them better manners abroad, than to come here and inſult us at home. People make ſuch a rout about ſmuggling their Frenchified goods, their men do us more miſchief. If we could but hinder the importing of them—

Mrs Mech. Ay, you are a true Briton, I ſee that, Mr Iſaac.

I. Fung. I warrant me: is brother Zachary at home?

Mrs Mech. Above ſtairs, Sir.

I. Fung. Any company with him?

Mrs Mech. Not any to hinder your viſit. La Fleur, ouvrez le porte.

I. Fung. Get along you—Mrs Mechlin, your ſervant. I can't think what the devil makes you quality ſo fond of the mounſiers; for my part, I don't ſee—March and be hang'd to you—you ſooty-fac'd—

[*Exeunt* I. Fungus, *and* La Fleur.

Mrs Mech. Come, Dolly, you may now appear.

Enter Jenny.

Jen. Mr Paduaſoy, Ma'am, the Spitalfields weaver; he has been waiting this hour, and ſays he has ſome people at home——

Mrs Mech. Let him enter; in a couple of minutes I'll follow you, Dolly. *Exit* Jenny.

Enter

Enter Paduaſoy.

Mrs Mech. Mr Paduaſoy, you may load yourſelf home with thoſe ſilks, they won't do for my market.

Mr Pad. Why, what's the matter, Madam?

Mrs Mech. Matter! you are a pretty fellow indeed, you a tradeſman! but it's lucky I know you; things might have been worſe; let us ſettle accounts, Mr Paduaſoy; you'll ſee no more of my money.

Pad. I ſhall be ſorry for that, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Sorry! anſwer me one queſtion; am not I the beſt cuſtomer that ever you had?

Pad. I confeſs it.

Mrs Mech. Have not I mortgaged my precious ſoul, by ſwearing to my quality cuſtomers that the ſtuff from your looms was the produce of Lyons?

Pad. Granted.

Mrs Mech. And unleſs that had been believ'd, could you have ſold them a yard, nay a nail?

Pad. I believe not.

Mrs Mech. Very well. Did not, Sir, I procure you more money for your curs'd goods, when ſold as the manufacture of France, than as mere Engliſh they could have ever produced you?

Pad. I never deny'd it.

Mrs Mech. Then are not you a pretty fellow, to blow up and ruin my reputation at once?

Pad. Me, Madam!

Mrs Mech. Yes, you.

Pad. As how?

Mrs Mech. Did not you tell me theſe pieces of ſilk were entire, and the only ones you had made of that pattern?

Pad. I did.

Mrs Mech. Now mind. Laſt Monday I left them as juſt landed, upon a pretence to ſecure them from ſeizure, at the old Counteſs of Furbelow's, by whoſe means I was ſure, at my own price, to get rid of them both; and who ſhould come in laſt night at the ball at the Manſion-Houſe, where my lady unluckily happen'd to be, with a full ſuit of the blue pattern upon her back, but Mrs Deputy Dowlaſs, dizen'd out like a ducheſs.

Pad. Mrs Deputy Dowlaſs! Is it poſſible?

Mrs Mech.

Mrs Mech. There is no denying the fact; but that was not all: if indeed Mrs Deputy had behaved like a gentlewoman, and ſwore they had been ſent her from Paris, why there the thing would have died; but ſee what it is to have to do with mechanics, the fool owned ſhe had them from you. I ſhould be glad to ſee any of my cuſtomers at a loſs for a lye. But thoſe trumpery traders, Mr Paduaſoy, you'll never gain any credit by them.

Pad. This muſt be a trick of my wife's; I know the women are intimate, but this piece of intelligence will make a hot houſe. None of my fault indeed, Mrs Mechlin; I hope, Ma'am, this won't make any difference?

Mrs Mech. Difference! I don't believe I ſhall be able to ſmuggle a gown for you theſe ſix months. What is in that bundle?

Pad. Some India handkerchiefs, that you promis'd to procure of a ſupercargo at Woolwich, for Sir Thomas Callico's lady.

Mrs Mech. Are you pretty forward with the light ſprigg'd waiſtcoats from Italy?

Pad. They will be out of the loom in a week.

Mrs Mech. You need not put any Genoa velvets in hand till the end of the autumn; but you may make me immediately a freſh ſortment of foreign ribbons for ſummer.

Pad. Any other commands, Mrs Mechlin?

Mrs Mech. Not at preſent, I think.

Pad. I wiſh you, Madam, a very good morning.

Mrs Mech. Mr Paduaſoy, Lord! I had lik'd to have forgot. You muſt write an anonymous letter to the Cuſtom-houſe, and ſend me ſome old ſilks to be ſeized; I muſt treat the town with a bonfire: it will make a fine paragraph for the papers; and at the ſame time advertiſe the public where ſuch things may be had.

Pad. I ſhan't fail, Madam. *Exit* Paduaſoy.

Mrs Mech. Who ſays now that I am not a friend to my country? I think the ſociety for the encouragement of arts ſhould vote me a premium. I am ſure I am one of the greateſt encouragers of our own manufactures.

Exit Mrs Mechlin.

ACT II.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *continues.*

Enter Commiſſary Fungus, Iſaac Fungus, *and* Mrs Mechlin.

Z. Fung. BROTHER Iſaac, you are a blockhead, I tell you. But firſt anſwer me this; can knowledge do a man any harm.

I. Fung. No, ſarting; what is befitting a man for to learn.

Z. Fung. To learn! and how ſhould you know what is befitting a gentleman to learn? Stick to your trade, maſter tallow-chandler.

I. Fung. Now, brother Zachary, can you ſay in your conſcience, as how it is deſcent to be learning to dance, when you ha' almoſt loſt the uſe of your legs?

Z. Fung. Loſt the uſe of my legs! to ſee but the malice of men! Do but ax Mrs Mechlin; now, Ma'am, does not Mr Dukes ſay, that, conſidering my time, I have made a wonderful progreſs?

I. Fung. Your time, brother Zac!

Z. Fung. Ay, my time, brother Iſaac. Why, I ha'nt been at it paſſing a couple of months, and we have at our ſchool two aldermen and a ſerjeant at law, that were full half a year before they could get out of hand.

Mrs Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fung. There now, Mrs Mechlin can vouch it. And pray, Ma'am, does not maſter allow, that of my age, I am the moſt hopeful ſcholar he has?

Mrs Mech. I can't but ſay, Mr Iſaac, that the 'ſquire has made a moſt prodigious improvement.

Z. Fung. Do you hear that? I wiſh we had but a kit, I would ſhow you what I could do: one, two, three, ha. One, two, three, ha. There are riſings and ſinkings!

Mrs Mech. Ay, marry, as light as a cork.

Z. Fung. A'n't it? Why, before next winter is over, he ſays, he'll fit me for dancing in public; and who knows but in Lent you may ſee me amble at a Ridotto with an opera ſinger.

Mrs Mech.

Mrs Mech. And I warrant he acquits himſelf as well as the beſt.

I. Fung. Mercy on me! and pray, brother, that thing like a ſword in your hand, what may the uſe of that implement be?

Z. Fung. This? oh, this is a foil.

I. Fung. A foil.

Z. Fung. Ay, a little inſtrument, by which we who are gentlemen are inſtructed to kill one another.

I. Fung. To kill! Marry, heaven forbid; I hope you have no ſuch bloody intentions. Why, brother Zac. you was uſed to be a peaceable man.

Z. Fung. Ay, that was when I was a paltry mechanic, and afraid of the law, but now I am another gueſs perſon: I have been in camps, cantoons, and intrenchments; have marched over bridges and breaches; I have ſeen the Ezel and Wezel? I'm got as rich as a Jew, and if any man dares to affront me, I'll let him know that my trade has been fighting.

I. Fung. Rich as a Jew! Ah, Zac. Zac. but if you had not had another gueſs trade than fighting, I doubt whether you would have returned altogether ſo rich: but now you have got all this wealth, why not ſit down and enjoy it quiet?

Z. Fung. Hark ye, Iſaac, do you purtend to know life? are you acquainted with the Beaux d'Eſprits of the age?

I. Fung. I don't underſtand you.

Z. Fung. No, I believe not; then how ſhould you know what belongs to gentility?

I. Fung. And why not as well as you, brother Zac. I hope I am every whit as well born?

Z. Fung. Ay, Iſaac, but the breeding is all; conſider I have been a gentleman above five years and three quarters, and I think ſhould know a little what belongs to the buſineſs; hey, Mrs Mechlin?

Mrs Mech. Very true, Sir.

Z. Fung. And as to this foil, do you know, Iſaac, in what the art of fencing conſiſts?

I. Fung. How ſhou'd I?

Z. Fung. Why, it is ſhort; there are
firſt is, to give your antagoniſt as m
the ſecond, to be careful and re

I. Fung. But how is this to

Z. Fung. Oh, eaſy enough; for do you ſee, if you can but divert your adverſary's point from the line of your body, it is impoſſible he ever ſhould hit you; and all this is done by a little turn of the wriſt, either this way, or that way. But I'll ſhow you: John, bring me a foil. Mrs Mechlin, it will be worth your obſerving. Here, brother Iſaac——[*Offers him a foil.*]

I. Fung. Not I.

Z. Fung. Theſe Bourgois are ſo frightful——Mrs Mechlin, will you, Ma'am, do me the favour to puſh at me a little? Mind, brother, when ſhe thruſts at me in carte, I do ſo; and when ſhe puſhes in tierce, I do ſo; and by this means a man is ſure to avoid being killed. But it may not be amiſs, brother Iſaac, to give you the progreſs of a regular quarrel; and then you will ſee what ſort of a thing a gentleman is. Now I have been told, do ſee, brother Iſaac, by a friend who has a regard for my honour, that Captain Jenkins, or Hopkins, or Wilkins, or what captain you pleaſe, has in public company call'd me a cuckold————

I. Fung. A cuckold! But how can that be? becauſe why, brother Zac. you be'nt married.

Z. Fung. But as I am juſt going to be married, that may very well happen, you know.

Mrs Mech. True.

Z. Fung. Yes, yes, the thing is natural enough. Well, the captain has ſaid, I am a cuckold; upon which, the firſt time I ſet eyes on captain Wilkins, either at Vauxhall, or at Ranelagh, I accoſt him, in a courteous, genteel-like manner——

I. Fung. And that's more than he merits.

Z. Fung. Your patience, dear Iſaac——in a courteous, gentleman-like manner; Captain Hopkins, your ſervant.

I. Fung. Why, you call'd him but now Captain Wilkins.

Z. Fung. P'ſhaw! you blockhead, I tell you the name does not ſignify nothing——Your ſervant; ſhall I crave your ear for a moment? The captain politely replies, your commands, good Mr Fungus? Then we walk ſide by ſide—Come here, Mrs Mechlin—[*They walk up and down*] for ſome time as civil as can be. Mind, brother Iſaac.

I. Fun. I do, I do.

Z. Fung.

Z. Fung. Hey!—no, t'other ſide, Mrs Mechlin—that's right—I hear, Captain Wilkins—

I. Fung. I knew it was Wilkins.

Z. Fung. Zounds! Iſaac, be quiet—Wilkins, that you have taken ſome liberties about and concerning of me, which, damme, I don't underſtand—

I. Fung. Don't ſwear, brother Zachary.

Z. Fung. Did ever mortal hear the like of this fellow?

I. Fung. But you are grown ſuch a reprobate ſince you went to the wars—

Z. Fung. Mrs Mechlin, ſtop the tongue of that blockhead; why, dunce, I am ſpeaking by rule, and Mrs Mechlin can tell you that duels and damme's go always together.

Mrs Mech. Oh, always.

Z. Fung. Which, damme, I don't underſtand. Liberties with you, cries the captain, where, when, and in what manner? Laſt Friday night, in company at the St Alban's, you called me a buck, and moreover ſaid that my horns were exalted. Now, Sir, I know very well what was your meaning by that, and therefore demand ſatisfaction. That, Sir, is what I never deny to a gentleman; but as to you, Mr Fungus, I can't conſent to give you that rank. How, Sir, do you deny my gentility! Oh, that affront muſt be anſwered this inſtant—Draw, Sir! Now puſh, Mrs Mechlin. [*They fence.*] There I parry tierce, there I parry carte, there I parry—— Hold, hold, have a care, zooks! Mrs Mechlin.

I. Fung. Ha, ha, ha! I think you have met with your match; well puſh'd, Mrs Mechlin.

Z. Fung. Ay, but inſtead of puſhing in tierce, ſhe puſhed me in carte, and came ſo thick with her thruſts that it was not in nature to parry them.

I. Fung. Well, well, I am fully convinced of your ſkill; but I think, brother Zac. you hinted an intention of marrying, is that your deſign?

Z. Fung. Undoubtedly.

I. Fung. And when?

Z. Fung. Why this evening.

I. Fung. So ſudden! and pray is it a ſecret to whom?

Z. Fung. A ſecret, no, I am proud of the match; ſhe brings me all that I want, her veins full of good blood: ſuch a family! ſuch an alliance! zooks, ſhe has a pedigree as long as the Mall, brother Iſaac, with large trees on each ſide, and all the boughs loaded with lords.

I. Fung. But has the lady no name.

Z. Fung. Name! ay, ſuch a name, Lord, we have nothing like it in London: none of your ſtunded little dwarfiſh words of one ſyllable; your Watts, and your Potts, and your Trotts; this rumbles through the throat like a cart with broad wheels. Mrs Mechlin, you can pronounce it better than me.

Mrs Mech. Lady Sachariſſa Mackirkincroft.

Z. Fung. Kirkincroft! there are a mouthful of ſyllables for you. Lineally deſcended from Hercules Alexander Charlemagne Hannibal, Earl of Glendower, prime miniſter to king Malcolm the firſt.

I. Fung. And are all the parties agreed.

Z. Fung. I can't ſay quite all; for the right honourable Peer that is to be my pappa (who by the bye is as proud as the devil) has flatly renounc'd the alliance, calls me here in his letter Plebeian, and ſays if we have any children, they will turn out very little better than pye-balls.

I. Fung. And what does the gentlewoman ſay?

Z. Fung. The gentlewoman! oh, the gentlewoman (who between ourſelves) is pretty near as high as her father; but, however, my perſon has prov'd too hard for her pride, and I take the affair to be as good as concluded.

I. Fung. It is reſolv'd?

Z. Fung. Fix'd.

I. Fung. I am ſorry for it.

Z. Fung. Why ſo? come, come, brother Iſaac, don't be uneaſy, I have a ſhrewd gueſs at your grievance; but though you may not be ſuffer'd to ſee lady Scracariſſa at firſt, yet who knows before long I may have intereſt enough with her to bring it about; and in the mean time you may dine when you will with the ſteward.

I. Fung. You are exceedingly kind.

Z. Fung. Mrs Mechlin, you don't think my lady will gainſay it?

Mrs Mech. By no means; it is wonderful, conſidering her rank, how mild and condeſcending ſhe is: why, but yeſterday, ſays her Ladyſhip to me, though, Mrs Mechlin, it can't be ſuppos'd that I ſhou'd admit any of the Fungus family into my preſence—

Z. Fung. No, no, to be ſure; not at firſt, as I ſaid.

Mrs Mech. Yet his brother, or any other relation, may dine with the ſervants every day.

Z. Fung.

Z. Fung. Do you hear, Iſaac? There's your true, inherent nobility, ſo humble and affable! but people of real rank never have any pride; that is only for upſtarts.

I. Fung. Wonderfully gracious! but here, brother Zac. you miſtake me, it is not for myſelf I am ſorry.

Z. Fung. Whom then?

I. Fung. For you. Don't you think that your wife will deſpiſe you?

Z. Fung. No.

I. Fung. Can you ſuppoſe that you will live together a month?

Z. Fung. Yes.

I. Fung. Why, can you bear to walk about your own houſe like a paltry dependent?

Z. Fung. No.

I. Fung. To have yourſelf and your orders contemn'd by your ſervants?

Z. Fung. No.

I. Fung. To ſee your property devoured by your lady's beggarly couſins, who, notwithſtanding, won't vouchſafe you a nod?—

Z. Fung. No.

I. Fung. Can you be blind at her bidding, run at her ſending, come at her calling, dine by yourſelf when ſhe has better-moſt company, and ſleep ſix nights a week in the garret?

Z. Fung. No.

I. Fung. Why, will you dare to diſobey, have the impudence to diſpute the ſovereign will and pleaſure of a lady like her?

Z. Fung. Ay, marry will I.

I. Fung. And don't you expect a whole clan of Andrew Ferraros, with their naked points at your throat?

Z. Fung. No.

I. Fung. Then you don't know half you will have to go through.

Z. Fung. Look you, brother, I know what you wou'd be at; you don't mean I ſhou'd marry at all.

I. Fung. Indeed, brother Zachary, you wrong me; I ſhould with pleaſure ſee you equally match'd, that is, to one of your own rank and condition.

Z. Fung. You would? I don't doubt it, but that is a pleaſure you never will have. Look you, Iſaac, I have made up my mind; it is a lady I like, and a lady I will have;

have; and if you ſay any more, I'll not be contented with that, for damme, I'll marry a ducheſs.

Enter La Fleur.

La Fleur. Le Maitre pour donner d'eloquence.

Z. Fung. What does the puppy ſay, Mrs Mechlin, for you know I can't parler vous.

Mrs Mech. The gentleman from the city, that is to make you a ſpeaker.

Z. Fung. Odzooks! a ſpecial fine fellow, let's have him.

Mrs Mech. Faites l' entrer. [*Exit* La Fleur.

I. Fung. Brother, as you are buſy, I will take another—

Z. Fung. No, no, this is the fineſt fellow of all, it is he that is to make me a man; and hark ye, brother, if I ſhou'd chance to riſe in the ſtate, no more words, your buſineſs is done.

I. Fung. What, I reckon ſome member of parliament.

Z. Fung. A member! Lord help you, brother Iſaac, this man is a whole ſenate himſelf. Why, it is the famous orationer that has publiſhed the book.

I. Fung. What, Mr Gruel?

Z. Fung. The ſame.

I. Fung. Yes, I have ſeen his name in the news.

Z. Fung. His knowledge is wonderful; he has told me ſuch ſecrets——Why, do you know, Iſaac, by what means 'tis we ſpeak?

I. Fung. Speak! why we ſpeak with our mouths.

Z. Fung. No, we don't.

I. Fung. No!

Z. Fung. No. He ſays we ſpeak by means of the tongue, the teeth, and the throat; and without them we only ſhould bellow.

I. Fung. But ſurely the mouth—

Z. Fung. The mouth, I tell you, is little or nothing, only juſt a cavity for the air to paſs through.

I. Fung. Indeed!

Z. Fung. That's all; and when the cavity's ſmall, little ſounds will come out; when large, the great ones proceed: obſerve now in whiſtling and bawling——[*whiſtles and bawls.*]——Do you ſee? Oh, he is a miraculous man.

I. Fung. But of what uſe is all this?

Z. Fung. But it's knowledge, an't it; and of what ſignification is that, you fool! And then as to uſe, why he can make

make me ſpeak in any manner he pleaſes; as a lawyer, a merchant, a country gentleman; whatever the ſubject requires.—But here he is.

Enter Mr Gruel.

Mr Gruel, your ſervant; I have been holding forth in your praiſe.

Gruel. I make no doubt, Mr Fungus, but to your declamation, or recitation (as Quintilian more properly terms it), I ſhall be indebted for much future praiſe, in as much as the reputation of the ſcholar does (as I may ſay) confer, or rather as it were reflect, a marvellous kind of luſtre on the fame of the maſter himſelf.

Z. Fung. There, Iſaac! didſt ever hear the like? he talks juſt as if it were all out of a book; what wou'd you give to be able to utter ſuch words?

I. Fung. And what ſhou'd I do with them? them holiday terms wou'd not paſs in my ſhop; there's no buying and ſelling with them.

Gruel. Your obſervation is pithy and pertinent: different ſtations different idioms demand; poliſhed periods accord ill with the mouths of mechanics; but as that tribe is permitted to circulate a baſer kind of coin, for the eaſe and convenience of inferior traffic, ſo it is indulg'd with a vernacular or vicious vulgar phraſeology, to carry on their interlocutory commerce. But I doubt, Sir, I ſoar above the region of your comprehenſion?

I. Fung. Why if you would come down a ſtep or two, I can't ſay but I ſhould underſtand you the better.

Z. Fung. And I too.

Gruel. Then to the familiar I fall: if the gentleman has any ambition to ſhine at a veſtry, a common-hall, or even a convivial club, I can ſupply him with ample materials.

I. Fung. No, I have no ſuch deſire.

Gruel. Not to loſe time; your brother here (for ſuch I find the gentleman is), in other reſpects a common man like yourſelf—

Z. Fung. No better.

Gruel. Obſerve how alter'd by means of my art: are you prepar'd in the ſpeech on the great importance of trade?

Z. Fung. Pretty well, I believe.

Gruel.

Gruel. Let your geſticulations be chaſte, and your muſcular movements conſiſtent.

Z. Fung. Never fear—

[*Enter* Jenny, *and whiſpers* Mrs Mechlin. Mrs Mechlin, you'll ſtay?

Mrs Mech. A little buſineſs; I'll return in an inſtant.

[*Exit* Mrs Mechlin.

Gruel. A little here to the left, if you pleaſe, Sir, there you will only catch hisprofile—that's right—now you will have the full force of his face; one, two, three; now off you go.

Z. Fung. When I conſider the vaſt importance of this day's debate; when I revolve the various viciſſitudes that this ſoil has ſuſtained; when I ponder what our painted progenitors were; and what we, their civilized ſucceſſors, are; when I reflect, that they fed on crab-apples and cheſnuts——

Gruel. Pignuts, good Sir, if you pleaſe.

Z. Fung. You are right; crab-apples and pignuts; and that we feaſt on green-peas, and on cuſtards: when I trace, in the recording hiſtorical page, that their floods gave them nothing but frogs, and now that we have fiſh by land-carriage, I am loſt in amazement at the prodgious power of commerce. Hail, commerce! daughter of induſtry, conſort to credit, parent of opulence, full ſiſter to liberty, and great grandmother to the art of navigation——

I. Fung. Why this gentlewoman has a pedigree as long as your wife's, brother Zac.

Z. Fung. Prithee, Iſaac, be quiet—art of navigation—a—a—'vigation——Zooks, that fellow has put me quite out.

Gruel. It matters not; this day's performance has largely fulfill'd your yeſterday's promiſe.

Z. Fung. But I han't half done, the beſt is to come; let me juſt give him that part about turnpegs—for the ſloughs, the mires, the ruts, the impaſſable bogs, that the languid, but generous, ſteed travelled through; he now pricks up his ears, he neighs, he canters, he capers through a whole region of turnpegs.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Your riding-maſter is below.

Z. Fung. Gadſo! then here we muſt end. You'll pardon

pardon me, good Mr Gruel; for as I want to be a finiſh'd gentleman as ſoon as I can, it is impoſſible for me to ſtick long to any one thing.

Gruel. Sir, though your exit is rather abrupt, yet the multiplicity of your avocations, do (as I may ſay) in ſome meaſure, cicatrize the otherwiſe mortal wound on this occaſion ſuſtained by decorum.

Z. Fung. Cicatrize! I could hear him all day.—He is a wonderful man, Well, Mr Gruel, to-morrow we will at it again.

Gruel. You will find me prompt at your ſlighteſt volition.

Z. Fung. I wiſh, brother Iſaac, I could have ſtaid, you ſhould have heard me oration away like a lawyer, about pleadings and preſidents; but all in good time.—— [*Exit* Fungus.

Mrs Mech. This gentleman, Sir, will gain you vaſt credit.

Gruel. Yes, Ma'am, the capabilities of the gentleman, I confeſs, are enormous; and as to you I am indebted for this promiſing pupil, you will permit me to expunge the obligation by an inſtantaneous and gratis lecture on that ſpecies of eloquence peculiar to ladies.

Mrs Mech. Oh, Sir, I have no ſort of occaſion—

Gruel. As to that biped, man (for ſuch I define him to be), a male or maſculine manner belongs—

Mrs Mech. Any other time, good Mr Gruel.

Gruel. So to that biped, woman, ſhe participating of his general nature, the word homo, in Latin, being promiſcuouſly uſed as woman or man—

Mrs Mech. For Heaven's ſake—

Gruel. But being caſt in a more tender and delicate mold—

Mrs Mech. Sir, I have twenty people in waiting—

Gruel. The ſoft, ſupple, and inſinuating graces—

Mrs Mech. I muſt inſiſt—

Gruel. Do appertain (as I may ſay) in a more peculiar, or particular, manner;—

Mrs Mech. Nay, then—

Gruel. Her rank in the order of entities—

Mrs Mech. I muſt thruſt you out of my houſe.

Gruel. Not calling her forth—

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Re-enter

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Gruel. Her rank in the order of entities—

Mrs Mech. I muſt thruſt you out of my houſe.

Gruel. Not calling her forth—

Mrs Mech. Was there ever ſuch a——[*puſhing him out.*]

Re-enter

Re-enter Gruel.

Gruel. To thoſe eminent, hazardous, and (as I may ſay) perilous conflicts, which ſo often—

Mrs Mech. Get down ſtairs, and be hang'd to you—[*puſhes him out.*] There he goes, as I live, from the top to the bottom: I hope, I han't done him a miſchief: You ar'n't hurt, Mr Gruel?—No, all's ſafe; I hear him going on with his ſpeech; an impertinent puppy.

I. Fung. Impertinent, indeed: I wonder all thoſe people don't turn your head, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Oh, I am pretty well uſed to 'em. But who comes here? Mr Iſaac, if you will ſtep into the next room, I have ſomething to communicate that well deſerves your attention. [*Exit* Iſaac Fungus.

Enter Simon.

Sim. Doctor Catgut at the foot of the ſtairs.

Mrs Mech. The devil he is! what can have brought him at this time of day? Watch, Simon, that nobody comes up whilſt he is here. [*Exit* Simon] I hope he has not heard of the pretty preſent we ſent him to-day.

Enter Dr Catgut.

Dr Cat. Madam Mechlin, your humble. I have, Ma'am, received a couple of compliments from your manſion this morning; one I find from a lodger of your's, the other I preſume from your niece; but for the laſt, I rather ſuppoſe I am indebted to you.

Mrs Mech. Me! indeed Doctor, you are widely miſtaken; I aſſure you, Sir, ſince your buſineſs broke out, I have never ſet eyes of her once.

Dr Cat. Then I am falſely informed.

Mrs Mech. But after all you muſt own it is but what you deſerve; I wonder, Doctor, you don't leave off theſe tricks.

Dr Cat. Why, what can I do, Mrs Mechlin? my conſtitution requires it.

Mrs Mech. Indeed! I ſhould not have thought it.

Dr Cat. Then the dear little devils are ſo deſperately fond.

Mrs Mech. Without doubt.

Dr Cat.

Dr Cat. And for frolick, flirtation, diligence, dreſs, and addreſs—

Mrs Mech. To be ſure.

Dr Cat. For what you call genuine gallantry, few men, I flatter myſelf, will be found that can match me.

Mrs Mech. Oh, that's a point given up.

Dr Cat. Hark ye, Molly Mechlin, let me periſh, child, you look divinely to-day.

Mrs Mech. Indeed!

Dr Cat. But that I have two or three affairs on my hands, I ſhou'd be poſitively tempted to trifle with thee a little.

Mrs Mech. Ay, but Doctor, conſider I am not of a trifling age, it wou'd be only loſing your time.

Dr Cat. Ha, ſo coy! But a propos, Molly, this lodger of your's; who is he, and what does he want?

Mrs Mech. You have heard of the great Mr Fungus?

Dr Cat. Well!

Mrs Mech. Being informed of your ſkill and abilities, he has ſent for you to teach him to ſing.

Dr Cat. Me teach him to ſing! What, does the ſcoundrel mean to affront me?

Mrs Mech. Affront you!

Dr Cat. Why, don't you know, child, that I have quitted that paltry profeſſion?

Mrs Mech. Not I.

Dr Cat. Oh, entirely renounc'd it.

Mrs Mech. Then what may you follow at preſent?

Dr Cat. Me!—nothing. I am a poet, my dear.

Mrs Mech. A poet?

Dr Cat. A poet. The Muſes—you know I was always fond of the ladies: I ſuppoſe you have heard of Shakeſpear, and Shadwell, of Tom Brown, and of Milton, and Hudibras?

Mrs Mech. I have.

Dr Cat. I ſhall blaſt all their laurels, by gad; I have juſt given the public a taſte, but there's a belly-full for them in my larder at home.

Mrs Mech. Upon my word, you ſurpriſe me: but pray, is poetry a trade to be learn'd?

Dr Cat. Doubtleſs. Capital as I am, I have not acquired it above a couple of years.

Mrs Mech. And could you communicate your art to another?

Dr Cat. To be ſure. Why, I have here in my pocket, my dear, a whole folio of rhimes, from Z quite to great A. Let us ſee, A. ay, here it begins, A, aſs, paſs, graſs, maſs, laſs, and ſo quite thro' the alphabet down to Z.—Zounds, grounds, mounds, pounds, hounds.

Mrs Mech. And what do you do with thoſe rhimes?

Dr Cat. Oh, we ſupply them.

Mrs Mech. Supply them?

Dr Cat. Ay, fill them up, as I will ſhew you. Laſt week, in a ramble to Dulwich, I made theſe rhimes into a duet for a new comic opera I have on the ſtocks. Mind, for I look upon the words as a model for that ſort of writing.

Firſt ſhe.—*There to ſee the ſluggiſh aſs,*
Through the meadows as we paſs,
Eating up the farmer's graſs,
Blyth, and merry, by the maſs,
As a lively country laſs.

Mrs Mech. Very pretty.

Dr Cat. A'n't it? Then he replies,

Hear the farmer cry out, Zounds!
As he trudges through the grounds,
Yonder beaſt has broke my mounds;
If the pariſh has no pounds,
Kill, and give him to the hounds.

Then Da Capo, both join in repeating the laſt ſtanza; and this tack'd to a tolerable tune, will run you for a couple of months. You obſerve?

Mrs Mech. Clearly. As our gentleman is deſirous to learn all kinds of things, I can't help thinking but he will take a fancy to this.

Dr Cat. In that caſe, he may command me, my dear; and I promiſe you, in a couple of months, he ſhall know as much of the matter as I do.

Mrs Mech. At preſent he is a little engaged, but as ſoon as the honey-moon is over—

Dr Cat. Honey-moon! Why, is he going to be marry'd?

Mrs Mech. This evening, I fancy.

Dr Cat. The fineſt opportunity for an introduction in nature.

nature. I have by me, Ma'am Mechlin, of my own compoſition, ſuch an epithalmium—

Mrs Mech. Thalmium, what's that?

Dr Cat. A kind of an elegy, that we poets compoſe at the ſolemnization of weddings.

Mrs Mech. Oh, oh!

Dr Cat. It is ſet to muſic already; for I ſtill compoſe for myſelf

Mrs Mech. You do?

Dr Cat. Yes. What think you now of providing a band, and ſerenading the 'ſquire to-night? It will be a pretty extempore compliment.

Mrs Mech. The prettieſt thought in the world. But I hear Mr Fungus's bell. You'll excuſe me, dear Doctor, you may ſuppoſe we are buſy.

Dr Cat. No apology then, I'll about it this inſtant.

Mrs Mech. As ſoon as you pleaſe;—any thing to get you out of the way. [*Aſide and exit.*]

Dr Cat. Your obſequious, good Madam Mechlin. But notwithſtanding all your fine ſpeeches, I ſhrewdly ſuſpect my bleſſed bargain at home was a preſent from you; and what ſhall I do with it? Theſe little embarraſſes we men of intrigue are eternally ſubject to. There will be no ſending it back. She will never let it enter the houſe.—Hey! gad, a lucky thought is come into my head—this ſerenade is finely contrived—Madam Mechlin ſhall have her couſin again, for I will return her bye-blow in the body of a double baſe-viol; ſo the bawd ſhall have a concert as well as the 'ſquire.— [*Exit* Dr Catgut.

ACT III.

SCENE *continues.*

Enter Harpy, Young Loveit, *and* Jenny.

Har. TELL your miſtreſs my name is Harpy; ſhe knows me, and how precious my time is.

Jen. Mr Harpy, the attorney of Furnival's Inn?

[*Exit* Jenny.

Har. The ſame. Ay, ay, young gentleman, th' your woman; I warrant your buſineſs is done.

knew Kitty Williams, that marry'd Mr Abednego Potiphar, the Jew broker?

Y. Lov. I did.

Har. And Robin Rainbow, the happy husband of the widow Champansy, from the isle of St Kitt's?

Y. Lov. I have seen him.

Har. All owing to her. Her success in that branch of business is wonderful! Why, I dare believe, since last summer, she has not sent off less than forty couple to Edinburgh.

Y. Lov. Indeed! she must be very adroit.

Har. Adroit! you shall judge; I will tell you a case: you know the large brick house at Peckham, with a turret at top?

Y. Lov. Well.

Har. There liv'd Miss Cicely Mite, the only daughter of old Mite the cheesemonger, at the corner of Newgate-street, just turned of fourteen, and under the wing of an old maiden aunt, as watchful as a dragon—but hush—I hear Mrs Mechlin, I'll take another season to finish my tale.

Y. Lov. But, Mr Harpy, as these kind of women are a good deal given to gossiping, I wou'd rather my real name was a secret till there is a sort of necessity.

Har. Gossiping! She, Lord help you, she is as close as a Catholic confessor.

Y. Lov. That may be, but you must give me leave to insist.

Har. Well, well, as you please.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Your very humble servant, good Madam Mechlin; I have taken the liberty to introduce a young gentleman, a friend of mine, to crave your assistance.

Mrs Mech. Any friend of your's, Mr Harpy;—won't you be seated, Sir?

Y. Lov. Ma'am. [*They sit down.*

Mrs Mech. And pray, Sir, how can I serve you?

Har. Why, Ma'am, the gentleman's situation is—but, Sir, you had better state your case to Mrs Mechlin yourself.

Y. Lov. Why, you are to know, Ma'am, that I am just escap'd

eſcap'd from the univerſity, where (I need not tell you) you are greatly eſteem'd.

Mrs Mech. Very obliging. I muſt own, Sir, I have had a very great reſpect for that learned body, ever ſince they made a near and dear friend of mine a doctor of muſic.

Y. Lov. Yes, Ma'am, I remember the gentleman.

Mrs Mech. Do you know him, Sir? I expect him here every minute to inſtruct a lodger of mine.

Y. Lov. Not intimately. Juſt arrived, but laſt night; upon my coming to town I found my father deceas'd, and all his fortune devis'd to his relict, my mother.

Mrs Mech. What, the whole!

Y. Lov. Every ſhilling—that is, for her life.

Mrs Mech. And to what ſum may it amount!

Y. Lov. Why, my mother is eternally telling me, that, after her, I ſhall inherit fifty or ſixty thouſand at leaſt.

Mrs Mech. Upon my word, a capital ſum.

Y. Lov. But of what uſe, my dear Mrs Mechlin, ſince ſhe refuſes to advance me a guinea upon the credit of it, and while the graſs grows—you know the proverb—

Mrs Mech. What, I ſuppoſe you want ſomething for preſent ſubſiſtence.

Y. Lov. Juſt my ſituation.

Mrs Mech. Have you thought of nothing for yourſelf?

Y. Lov. I am reſolv'd to be guided by you.

Mrs Mech. What do you think of a wife?

Y. Lov. A wife!

Mrs Mech. Come, come, don't deſpiſe my advice: when a young man's finances are low, a wife is a much better reſource than a uſurer; and there are in this town a number of kind-hearted widows, that take a pleaſure in repairing the injuries done by fortune to handſome young fellows.

Har. Mrs Mechlin has reaſon.

Y. Lov. But, dear Ma'am, what can I do with a wife?

Mrs Mech. Do! Why, like other young fellows who marry ladies a little ſtricken in years; make her your banker and ſteward. If you ſay but the word, before night I'll give you a widow with two thouſand a year in her pocket.

Y. Lov. Two thouſand a year! a pretty employment, if the reſidence cou'd but be diſpens'd with.

Mrs Mech.

Mrs Mech. What do you mean by reſidence? Do you think a gentleman, like a pitiful trader, is to be eternally tack'd to his wife's petticoat: when ſhe is in town, be you in the country; as ſhe ſhifts, do you ſhift. Why, you need not be with her above thirty days in the year; and let me tell you, you won't find a more eaſy condition: twelve months ſubſiſtence for one month's labour!

Y. Lov. Two thouſand a year, you are ſure?

Mrs Mech. The leaſt penny.

Y. Lov. Well, Madam, you ſhall diſpoſe of me juſt as you pleaſe.

Mrs Mech. Very well; if you will call in half an hour at fartheſt, I believe we ſhall finiſh the buſineſs.

Y. Lov. In half an hour?

Mrs Mech. Preciſely. Oh, diſpatch is the very life and ſoul of my trade. Mr Harpy will tell you my terms, you will find them reaſonable enough.

Har. Oh, I am ſure we ſhall have no diſpute about thoſe.

Y. Lov. No, no.——[*Going.*]

Mrs Mech. Oh, but Mr Harpy, it may be proper to mention that the gentlewoman, the party, is upward of ſixty.

Y. Lov. With all my heart; it is the purſe, not the perſon I want. Sixty! ſhe is quite a girl; I wiſh with all my ſoul ſhe was ninety.

Mrs Mech. Get you gone, you are a devil, I ſee that.

Y. Lov. Well, for half an hour, ſweet Mrs Mechlin, adieu. [*Exeunt* Young Loveit *and* Harpy.

Mrs Mech. Soh! I have provided for my dowager from Devonſhire-ſquare, and now to cater for my commiſſary. Here he comes.

Enter Fungus *and* Bridoun.

Fung. So, in ſix weeks——Oh, Mrs Mechlin, any news from the lady?

Mrs Mech. I expect her here every moment. She is conſcious that in this ſtep ſhe deſcends from her dignity; but being deſirous to ſcreen you from the fury of her noble relations, ſhe is determined to let them ſee that the act and deed is entirely her own.

Fung. Very kind, very obliging, indeed. But, Mrs Mechlin, as the family is ſo furious, I reckon we never be reconcil'd.

Mrs

Mrs Mech. I don't know that. When you have bought commiſſions for her three younger brothers, diſcharg'd the mortgage on the paternal eſtate, and portioned off eight or nine of her ſiſters, it is not impoſſible but my lord may be prevail'd on to ſuffer your name—

Fung. Do you think ſo?

Mrs Mech. But then a work of time, Mr Fungus.

Fung. Ay, ay, I know very well things of that kind are not brought about in a hurry.

Mrs Mech. But I muſt prepare matters for the lady's reception.

Fung. By all means. The jewels are ſent to her ladyſhip?

Mrs Mech. To be ſure.

Fung. And the ring for her ladyſhip, and her ladyſhip's licence?

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, and her ladyſhip's parſon too; all are prepar'd.

Fung. Parſon! why, won't her ladyſhip pleaſe to be marry'd at Powl's?

Mrs Mech. Lord, Mr Fungus, do you think a lady of her rank and condition would bear to be ſeen in public at once with a perſon like you?

Fung. That's true, I—

Mrs Mech. No, no; I have ſent to Dr Tickletext, and the buſineſs will be done in the parlour below.

Fung. As you and her ladyſhip pleaſes, good Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. You will get dreſs'd as ſoon as you can.

Fung. I ſhall only take a ſhort leſſon from Mr Bridoun, and then wait her ladyſhip's pleaſure. Mrs Mechlin, may my brother be by?

Mrs Mech. Ay, ay, provided his being ſo is kept a ſecret from her.

Fung. Never fear.— [*Exit* Mrs Mechlin. Well, Mr Bridoun, and you think I am mended a little?

Brid. A great deal.

Fung. And that in a month or ſix weeks I may be able to prance upon a long tail'd-horſe in Hyde-Park, without any danger of falling?

Brid. Without doubt.

Fung. It will be vaſt pleaſant, in the heat of the day, to canter along the King's-road, ſide by ſide, with the ladies,

ladies, in the thick of the duſt; but that I muſt not hope for this ſummer.

Brid. I don't know that, if you follow it cloſe.

Fung. Never fear, I ſhan't be ſparing of—But come, come, let us get to our buſineſs—John, have the carpenters brought home my new horſe?

Enter John.

John. It is here, Sir, upon the top of the ſtairs.

Fung. Then fetch it in, in an inſtant. [*Exit* John.]—What a deal of time and trouble there goes, Mr Bridoun, to the making a gentleman. And do your gentlemen born now (for I reckon you have had of all ſorts) take as much pains as we do?

Brid. To be ſure, but they begin at an earlier age.

Fung. There is ſomething in that; I did not know but they might be apter, more cuterer now in catching their larning.

Brid. Diſpoſitions do certainly differ.

Fung. Ay, ay, ſomething in nater, I warrant, as they ſay the children of blackamoors will ſwim as ſoon as they come into the world.

[*Enter Servants with a Wooden Horſe.*]

Oh, here he is,—ods me! it is a ſtately fine beaſt.

Brid. Here, my lads, place it here—very well; where's your ſwitch, Mr Fungus?

Fung. I have it.

Brid. Now let me ſee you vault nimbly into your ſeat.—Zounds! you are got upon the wrong ſide, Mr Fungus?

Fung. I am ſo indeed, but we'll ſoon rectify that. Now we are right: may I have leave to lay hold of the mane?

Brid. If you can't mount him without.

Fung. I will try; but this ſteed is ſo deviliſh tall—Mr Bridoun, you don't think he'll throw me?

Brid. Never fear.

Fung. Well, if he ſhou'd, he can't kick; that's one comfort, however.

Brid. Now mind your poſition.

Fung. Stay till I recover my wind.

Brid. Let your head be erect.

Fung. There.

Brid. And your ſhoulders fall eaſily back.

Fung.

Fung. Ho—there.

Brid. Your ſwitch perpendicular in your right hand—your right—that is it; your left to the bridle.

Fung. There.

Brid. Your knees in, and your toes out.

Fung. There.

Brid. Are you ready?

Fung. When you will.

Brid. Off you go.

Fung. Don't let him gallop at firſt.

Brid. Very well: preſerve your poſition.

Fung. I warrant.

Brid. Does he carry you eaſy?

Fung. All the world like a cradle. But, Mr Bridoun, I go at a wonderful rate.

Brid. Mind your knees.

Fung. Ay, ay; I can't think but this here horſe ſtands ſtill very near as faſt as another can gallop.

Brid. Mind your toes.

Fung. Ho, ſtop the horſe. Zounds! I'm out of the ſtirrups, I can't ſit him no longer; there I go— [*Falls off.*

Brid. I hope you ar'n't hurt?

Fung. My left hip has a little contuſion.

Brid. A trifle, quite an accident; it might happen to the very beſt rider in England.

Fung. Indeed!

Brid. We have ſuch things happen every day at the manege; but you are vaſtly improv'd.

Fung. Why, I am grown bolder a little; and, Mr Bridoun, when do you think I may venture to ride a live horſe?

Brid. The very inſtant you are able to keep your ſeat on a dead one—

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Bleſs me, Mr Fungus, how you are trifling your time! I expect lady Sachariſſa every moment, and ſee what a trim you are in.

Fung. I beg pardon, good Madam Mechlin. I'll be equipp'd in a couple of minutes; where will her ladyſhip pleaſe to receive?

Mrs Mech. In this room, to be ſure; come, ſtir, ſtir!

Fung. I have had a little fall from my horſe. I'll go as faſt as I—Mr Bridoun, will you lend me a lift?

[*Exeunt* Fungus *and* Bridoun.

Mrs Mech. There—Jenny, ſhow Mrs Loveit in here—Who's there—

Enter Servants.

Pray move that piece of lumber out of the way. Come, come, make haſte. Madam, if you'll ſtep in here for a moment.

Enter Mrs Loveit.

Mrs Lov. So, ſo, Mrs Mechlin—well, you ſee I am true to my time; and how have you throve, my good woman?

Mrs Mech. Beyond expectations.

Mrs Lov. Indeed! And have you provided a party?

Mrs Mech. Ay, and ſuch a party, you might ſearch the town round before you could meet with his fellow: he'll ſuit you in every reſpect.

Mrs Lov. As how, as how, my dear woman?

Mrs Mech. A gentleman by birth and by breeding, none of your little whipper ſnapper Jacks, but a countenance as comely, and a preſence as portly: he has one fault indeed, if you can but overlook that.

Mrs Lov. What is it?

Mrs Mech. His age.

Mrs Lov. Age! how, how?

Mrs Mech. Why, he is rather under your mark, I am afraid; not above twenty at moſt.

Mrs Lov. Well, well, ſo he anſwers in every thing elſe, we muſt overlook that; for, Mrs Mechlin, there is no expecting perfection below.

Mrs Mech. True, Ma'am.

Mrs Lov. And where is he?

Mrs Mech. I look for him every minute; if you will but ſtep into the drawing-room, I have given him ſuch a picture, that I am ſure he is full as impatient as you.

Mrs Lov. My dear woman, you are ſo kind and obliging: but, Mrs Mechlin, how do I look? Don't flatter me, do you think my figure will ſtrike him?

Mrs Mech. Or he muſt be blind.

Mrs Lov. You may juſt hint black don't become me, that

that I am a little paler of late; the loſs of a huſband one loves will cauſe an alteration, you know.

Mrs Mech. True; oh, he will make an allowance for that.

Mrs Lov. But things will come round in a trice.

[*Exit* Mrs Loveit.

Enter Simon.

Sim. Madam, Miſs Dolly is dizen'd out and every thing ready.

Mrs Mech. Let her wait for the Commiſſary here; I will introduce him the inſtant he is dreſs'd.

[*Exit* Mrs Mechlin.

Sim. Miſs Dolly, you may come in; your aunt will be here in an inſtant.

Enter Dolly *and* Jenny.

Dolly. Huſh, Simon, huſh, to your poſt.

Sim. I am gone—— [*Exit* Simon.

Dolly. Well, Jenny, and have I the true quality air?

Jen. As perfectly, Ma'am, as if you had been bred to the buſineſs; and for figure, I defy the firſt of them all. For my part, I think Mr Fungus very well off; when the ſecret comes out, I don't ſee what right he has to be angry.

Dolly. Oh! when once he is noos'd, let him ſtruggle as much as he will, the cord will be drawn only the tighter.

Jen. Ay, ay, we may truſt to your management. I hope, Miſs, I ſhall have the honour to follow your fortunes; there will be no bearing this houſe when once you have left it.

Dolly. No, Jenny, it would be barbarous to rob my aunt of ſo uſeful a ſecond; beſides, for miſtreſs and maid, we rather know one another a little to well.

Jen. Indeed!—but here comes Mr Fungus; remember diſtance and dignity.

Dolly. I warrant you, wench.

Jen. So, I ſee what I have to hope. Our young filly ſeems to be ſecure of her match; but I may joſtle her the wrong ſide the poſt: we will have a trial, however; but I muſt ſee and find out the brother.

Enter Z. Fungus *and* Mrs Mechlin.

Fung. Yes, ſcarlet is vaſtly becoming, and takes very much

much with the ladies; quite proper too, as I have been in the army.

Mrs Mech. Stay where you are till you are announc'd to the lady. Mr Fungus begs leave to throw himſelf at your ladyſhip's feet.

Dolly. The mon may dra nigh.

Mrs Mech. Approach.

Fung. One, two, three, ha! Will that do?

Mrs Mech. Pretty well.

Fung. May I begin to make love?

Mrs Mech. When you will.

Fung. Now ſtand my friend, Mr Gruel. But ſhe has ſuch a deal of dignity that ſhe daſhes me quite.

Mrs Mech. Courage.

Fung. Here, hold the paper to prompt me in caſe I ſhou'd ſtumble—Madam, or, may it pleaſe your ladyſhip, when I preponderate the grander of your high ginnyalogy, and the mercantile meanneſs of my dingy deſcent; when I conſider that your anceſtors, like Admiral Anſon, ſail'd all round the world in the ark, and that it is a matter of doubt whether I ever had any forefathers or no; I totter, I tremble, at the thoughts of my towering ambition.—Ah—a, is not Phaeton next?—

Mrs Mech. Hey!—[*Looking at the paper.*]—No, Luna.

Fung. Right;—ambition—dignity how debas'd, diſtance how great! it is as if the link ſhou'd demand an alliance with Luna, or the buſhy bramble court the boughs of the ſtately Scotch fir; it is as if——What's next?

Mrs Mech. Next—hey!——I have loſt the place I am afraid—Come, come, enough has been ſaid; you have ſhow'd the ſenſe you entertain of the honour. Upon theſe occaſions, a third perſon is fitteſt to cut matters ſhort.—Your ladyſhip hears that—

Dolly. Yes, yes, I ken weel enough what the mon wou'd be at. Mrs Mechlin has ſpeard ſike things in your great commendations, Mr Fungus, that I canno' but ſay I clik'd a fancy to you from the very beginning.

Fung. Much oblig'd to Mrs Mechlin, indeed, pleaſe your la'ſhip—

Dolly. You ken I am of as auncient a family as any North-Briton can boaſt.

Fung. I know it full well, pleaſe your la'ſhip.

Dolly.

Dolly. And that I ſhall get the ill-wull of a' my kin by this match.

Fung. I am ſorry for that, pleaſe your la'ſhip.

Dolly. But after the ceremony it will be proper to withdra' from town for a ſhort ſpace o' time.

Fung. Pleaſe your la'ſhip, what your la'ſhip pleaſes.

Dolly. In order to gi' that goſſip, Scandal, juſt time to tire her tongue.

Fung. True, your la'ſhip.

Dolly. I mun expect that the folk will mak' free wi' my character in chooſing ſike a conſort as you.

Fung. And with me too, pleaſe your la'ſhip.

Dolly. Wi' you, mon!

Mrs Mech. Hold your tongue.

Dolly. Donna you think the honour will dra' mickle envy upon you?

Fung. Oh, to be ſure, pleaſe your la'ſhip. I did not mean that.

Dolly. Weel, I ſay, we'll gang into the country.

Fung. As ſoon as your la'ſhip pleaſes; I have a ſweet houſe hard by Reading.

Dolly. You ha'; that's right.

Fung. One of the moſt pleaſanteſt places that can be again.

Dolly. Ha' you a good proſpect?

Fung. Twenty ſtage-coaches drive every day by the door, beſides carts and gentlemens carriages.

Dolly. Ah, that will—

Mrs Mech. Oh, your ladyſhip will find all things prepar'd: in the next room the attorney waits with the writings.

Fung. The honour of your la'ſhip's hand—

Dolly. Maiſter Fungus, you're a little too haſty.

[*Exit* Dolly.

Mrs Mech. Not till after the nuptials; you muſt not expect to be too familiar at firſt.

Fung. Pray, when do think we ſhall bring the bedding about?

Mrs Mech. About the latter end of the year, when the winter ſets in.

Fung. Not before!

Enter

Enter Young Loveit.

Y. Lov. I hope, Madam Mechlin, I have not exceeded my hour; but I expected Mr Harpy wou'd call.

Mrs Mech. He is in the next room with a lady. Oh, Mr Fungus, this gentleman is ambitious of obtaining the nuptial benediction from the ſame hands after you.

Fung. He's heartily welcome—What, and is his wife a woman of quality too?

Mrs Mech. No, no, a cit; but monſtrouſly rich: but your lady will wonder—

Fung. Ay, ay, but you'll follow; for I ſhan't know what to ſay to her when we are alone. [*Exit* Fungus.

Mrs Mech. I will ſend you, Sir, your ſpouſe in an inſtant: the gentlewoman is a widow, ſo you may throw in what raptures you pleaſe.

Y. Lov. Never fear. [*Exit* Mrs Mechlin.] And yet this ſcene is ſo new, how to acquit myſelf—let me recollect—ſome piece of a play now.—"Vouchafe, divine perfection"—No, that won't do for a dowager; it is too humble and whining. But ſee, the door opens, ſo I have no time for rehearſal—I have it,—

"Claſp'd in the folds of love I'll meet my doom,
"And act my"—

Enter Mrs Loveit.

Mrs Lov. Hah!

Y. Lov. By all that's monſtrous, my mother!

Mrs Lov. That rebel my ſon, as I live!

Y. Lov. The quotation was quite a-propos: had it been a little darker, I might have reviv'd the ſtorey of OEdipus.

Mrs Lov. So, ſirrah, what makes you from your ſtudies?

Y. Lov. A ſmall hint I received of your inclinations brought me here, Ma'am, in order to prevent, if poſſible, my father's fortune from going out of the family.

Mrs Lov. Your father! how dare you diſturb his dear aſhes! you know well enough how his dear memory melts me; and that at his very name my heart is ready to break.

Y. Lov. Well ſaid, my old matron of Epheſus.

Mrs Lov. That is what you want, you diſobedient, unnatural monſter; but complete, accompliſh your cruelty: ſend

ſend me the ſame road your villanies forc'd your father to take.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Hey-day! What the deuce have we here; our old lady in tears!

Mrs Lov. Diſappointed a little, that's all.

Mrs Mech. Pray, Ma'am, what can occaſion—

Mrs Lov. Lord bleſs me, Mrs Mechlin, what a blunder you have made!

Mrs Mech. A blunder! as how?

Mrs Lov. Do you know who you have brought me?

Mrs Mech. Not perfectly.

Mrs Lov. My own ſon! that's all.

Mrs Mech. Your ſon!

Mrs Lov. Ay, that rebellious, unnatural—

Mrs Mech. Blunder indeed! but who could have thought it? Why, by your account, Ma'am, I imagin'd your ſon was a child ſcarce out of his frocks.

Mrs Lov. Here's company coming, ſo my reputation will be blaſted for ever.

Mrs Mech. Never fear, leave the care on't to me.

Enter Fungus *and* Dolly.

Fung. What is the matter?—you make ſuch a noiſe, there is no ſuch thing as minding the writings.

Mrs Mech. This worthy lady, an old friend of mine, not having ſet her eyes on her ſon ſince the death of his father, and being appris'd by me that here ſhe might meet with him, came with a true paternal affection to give him a little wholeſome advice.

Mrs Lov. Well ſaid, Mrs Mechlin.

Mrs Mech. Which the young man return'd in a way ſo brutal and barbarous, that his poor mother—be comforted Ma'am; you had better repoſe on my bed—

Mrs Lov. Any where to get out of his ſight.

Mrs Mech. Here, Jenny—

Mrs Lov. Do you think you can procure me another party?

Mrs Mech. Never doubt it.

Mrs Lov. Ugh, ugh——[*Exit coughing.*

Mrs Mech. Bear up a little, Ma'am.

Fung.

Fung. Fye upon you! you have thrown the old gentlewoman into the ſtericks.

Y. Lov. Sir!

Fung. You a man, you are a ſcandal, a ſhame to your ſect.

Enter Dr Catgut.

Dr Cat. Come, come, Mrs Mechlin, are the couple prepar'd?—The fiddles are tun'd, the bows ready roſin'd, and the whole band—Oh, you, Sir, are one party I reckon, but where is the—Ah, Dolly, what are you here, my dear?

Dolly. Soh!

Fung. Dolly! Who the devil can this be?

Dr Cat. As nice and as ſpruce too, the bride-maid I warrant—why, you look as blooming, you ſlut.

Fung. What can this be? hark ye, Sir!

Dr Cat. Well, Sir.

Fung. Don't you think you are rather too familiar with a lady of her rank and condition?

Dr Cat. Rank and condition!—what, Dolly?

Fung. Dolly! what a plague poſſeſſes the man—this is no Dolly, I tell you.

Dr Cat. No!

Fung. No, this is lady Scracariſſa Makirkincroft.

Dr Cat. Who?

Fung. Deſcended from the old, old, old earl of Glendowery.

Dr Cat. What, ſhe, Dolly Mechlin?

Fung. Dolly Devil, the man's out of his wits, I believe.

Enter Mrs Mechlin.

Oh, Mrs Mechlin, will you ſet this matter to rights?

Mrs Mech. How, Dr Catgut!

Fung. The ſtrangeſt fellow here has danc'd upſtairs, and has Dolly, Dolly, Dolly'd my lady; who the plague can he be?

Dr Cat. Oh, a-propos, Molly Mechlin, what is this the man that is to be marry'd? the marriage will never hold good; why, he is more frantic and madder—

Fung. Mad! John, fetch me the foils; I'll carte and tierce you, you ſcoundrel.

Enter

Enter Iſaac Fungus *and* Jenny.

I. Fung. Where's brother?—it a'n't over; you be'n't marry'd, I hope.

Z. Fung. No, I believe not; why, what is the—

I. Fung. Pretty hands you are got into. Your ſervant, good Madam; what, this is the perſon, I warrant; ay, how pretty the puppet is painted! do you know who ſhe is?

Z. Fung. Who ſhe is? without doubt.

I. Fung. No, you don't, brother Zac. only the ſpawn of that devil incarnate, dreſs'd out as—

Z. Fung. But hark ye, Iſaac, are—don't be in a hurry—are you ſure—

I. Fung. Sure—the girl of the houſe, abhorring their ſcandalous project, has freely confeſſed the whole ſcheme. Jenny, ſtand forth, and anſwer boldly to what I ſhall aſk: Is not this wench the woman's niece of the houſe?

Jen. I fancy ſhe will hardly deny it.

I. Fung. And is not this miſtreſs of your's a moſt profligate—

Mrs Mech. Come, come, Maſter Iſaac, I will ſave you the trouble, and cut this matter ſhort in an inſtant—well then, this girl, this Dolly, is my niece; and what then?

Z. Fung. And ar'n't you aſhamed!

Y. Lov. She aſhamed! I would have told you, but I could not get you to liſten; why, ſhe brought me here to marry my mother.

Z. Fung. Marry your mother! Lord have mercy on us, what a monſter! to draw a young man in to be guilty of incenſe. But hark ye, brother Iſaac, [*they retire*]—

Dr Cat. Gads my life, what a ſweet project I have help'd to deſtroy! But come, Dolly, I'll piece thy broken fortunes again: thou haſt a good pretty voice; I'll teach thee a thrill and a ſhake; perch thee amongſt the boughs at one of the gardens; and then as a miſtreſs, which, as the world goes, is a much better ſtation than that of a wife, not the proudeſt of them all—

Mrs Mech. Miſtreſs! No, no, we have not managed our matters ſo badly. Hark ye, Mr Commiſſary.

Z. Fung. Well, what do you want?

Mrs Mech. Do you propoſe to conſummate your nuptials?

Z. Fung. That's a pretty queſtion, indeed.

Mrs Mech. You have no objection then to paying the penalty, the contract here that Mr Harpy has drawn.

Z. Fung. The contract, hey, brother Iſaac.

I. Fung. Let me ſee it.

Mrs Mech. Soft you there, my maker of candles, it is as well where it is; but you need not doubt of it's goodneſs: I promiſe you the beſt advice has been taken.

Z. Fung. What a damn'd fiend, what a harpy!

Mrs Mech. And why ſo, my good Maſter Fungus? Is it becauſe I have practis'd that trade by retail which you have carry'd on in the groſs? What injury do I do the world? I feed on their follies, 'tis true; and the game, the plunder, is fair: but the fangs of you, and your tribe,

A whole people have felt, and for ages will feel;
To their candour and juſtice I make my appeal:
Tho' a poor humble ſcourge in a national cauſe,
As I truſt I deſerve, I demand your applauſe.

THE

THE

LAME LOVER;

A COMEDY,

IN

THREE ACTS.

PROLOGUE.

Written and Spoken by Mr GENTLEMAN.

PROLOGUES, like cards of compliment, we find,
Moſt as unmeaning as politely kind;
To beg a favour, or to plead excuſe,
Of both appears to be the gen'ral uſe.
Shall my words, tipt with flattery, prepare
A kind exertion of your tend'reſt care?
Shall I preſent our Author to your ſight,
All pale and trembling for his fate this night?
Shall I ſolicit the moſt pow'rful arms
To aid his cauſe—the force of beauty's charms?
Or tell each critic, his approving taſte
Muſt give the ſterling ſtamp, wherever plac'd?
This might be done—but ſo to ſeek applauſe
Argues a conſcious weakneſs in the cauſe.
No—let the Muſe in ſimple truth appear,
Reaſon and *Nature* are the judges here:
If by their ſtrict and ſelf-deſcribing laws,
The ſev'ral characters to-night ſhe draws;
If from the whole a pleaſing piece is made,
On the true principles of light and ſhade;
Struck with the harmony of juſt deſign,
Your eyes—your ears—your hearts, will all combine
To grant applauſe:—but if an erring hand
Groſs diſproportion marks in motley band,
If the group'd figures falſe connexions ſhow,
And glaring colours without meaning glow,
Your wounded feelings, turn'd a diff'rent way,
Will juſtly damn—th' *abortion* of a play.
As Farquhar has obſerv'd, our Engliſh law,
Like a fair ſpreading oak, the Muſe ſhall draw,
By Providence deſign'd, and wiſdom made
For honeſty to thrive beneath its ſhade;
Yet from its boughs ſome inſects ſhelter find,
Dead to each nobler feeling of the mind,
Who thrive, alas! too well, and never ceaſe
To prey on juſtice, property, and peace.
At ſuch to-night, with other *legal* game,
Our vent'rous author takes ſatiric aim;
And brings, he hopes, originals to view,
Nor pilfers from th' Old Magpie, nor the New*.
But will to Candour cheerfully ſubmit;
She reigns in boxes, galleries, and pit.

* Alluding to Mr Garrick's Prologue to the Jubilee.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Luke Limp, —	Mr Foote.
Serjeant Circuit, —	Mr Vandermere,
Colonel Secret, —	Mr Robson.
Jack, — —	Mr Weston.
Mr Woodford, —	Mr Knowles.
Mr Fairplay, —	Mr Wheeler.
Firſt Servant, —	Mr Dancer.
Second Servant, —	Mr Griffiths.
Mrs Circuit, —	Mrs Gardner.
Charlotte, —	Mrs Jewell.
Mrs Simper, —	Mrs Saunders.
Betty, —	Mrs Read.

ACT

ACT I.

Enter Serjeant Circuit *and* Charlotte.

Char. I Tell you, Sir, his love to me is all a pretence: it is amazing that you who are ſo acute, ſo quick in diſcerning on other occaſions, ſhould be ſo blind upon this.

Serj. But where are your proofs, Charlotte? What ſignifies your opening matters which your evidence cannot ſupport?

Char. Surely, Sir, ſtrong circumſtances in every court ſhould have weight.

Serj. So they have collaterally, child, that is by way as it were of corroboration, or where mattets are doubtful; then indeed, as Plowden wiſely obſerves, "Les circonſtances ajout beaucoup depoids aux faits."—You underſtand me?

Char. Not perfectly well.

Serj. Then to explain by caſe in point; A, we will ſuppoſe, my dear, robs B of a watch upon Hounſlow heath —dy'e mind, child?

Char. I do, Sir.

Serj. A is taken up and indicted; B ſwears poſitively to the identity of A.—Dy'e obſerve?

Char. Attentively.

Serj. Then what does me A, but ſets up the alibi C, to defeat the affidavit of B.—You take me.

Char. Clearly.

Serj. So far you ſee then the balance is even.

Char. True.

Serj. But then to turn the ſcale, child, againſt A, in favour of B, they produce the circumſtance D, viz. B's watch found in the pocket of A; upon which, the teſtimony of C being contradicted by B,—no, by D,—why then A, that is to ſay C,—no D,—joining B, they convict C,—no, no, A,—againſt the affidavit of C.—So this being pretty clear, child, I leave the application to you.

Char. Very obliging, Sir. But ſuppoſe now, Sir, it ſhould appear that the attention of Sir Luke Limp is directed to ſome other object, would that not induce you to—

Serj. Other object! Where?

Char.

Char. In this very houſe.

Serj. Here! why, the girl is non compos; there's nobody here, child, but a parcel of Abigails.

Char. No, Sir?

Serj. No.

Char. Yes, Sir, one perſon elſe.

Serj. Who is that?

Char. But remember, Sir, my accuſation is confined to Sir Luke.

Serj. Well, well.

Char. Suppoſe, then, Sir, thoſe powerful charms which made a conqueſt of you, may have extended their empire over the heart of Sir Luke?

Serj. Why, huſſy, you don't hint at your mother-in-law?

Char. Indeed, Sir, but I do.

Serj. Ay; why, this is point blank treaſon againſt my ſovereign authority: but can you, Charlotte, bring proof of any overt acts?

Char. Overt acts!

Serj. Ay; that is, any declaration by writing, or even word of mouth is ſufficient; then let 'em demur if they dare.

Char. I can't ſay that, Sir; but another organ has been pretty explicit.

Serj. Which?

Char. In thoſe caſes a very infallible one—the eye.

Serj. Pſhaw! nonſenſe and ſtuff.—The eye!—The eye has no authority in a court of law.

Char. Perhaps not, Sir; but it is a deciſive evidence in a court of love.

Serj. Hark you, huſſy, why you would not file an information againſt the virtue of madam your mother; you would not inſinuate that ſhe has been guilty of crim. con.?

Char. Sir, you miſtake me; it is not the lady, but the gentleman I am about to impeach.

Serj. Have a care, Charlotte, I ſee on what ground your action is founded—jealouſy.

Char. You were never more deceived in your life; for it is impoſſible, my dear Sir, that jealouſy can ſubſiſt without love.

Serj. Well.

Char.

Char. And from that paſſion (thank heaven) I am pretty free at preſent.

Serj. Indeed!

Char. A ſweet object to excite tender deſires!

Serj. And why not, huſſy?

Char. Firſt as to his years.

Serj. What then?

Char. I own, Sir, age procures honour, but I believe it is very rarely productive of love.

Serj. Mighty well.

Char. And tho' the loſs of a leg can't be imputed to Sir Luke Limp as a fault—

Serj. How.

Char. I hope, Sir, at leaſt you will allow it as a misfortune.

Serj. Indeed!

Char. A pretty thing truly, for a girl, at my time of life, to be tied to a man with one foot in the grave.

Serj. One foot in the grave! the reſt of his body is not a whit the nearer for that.—There has been only an execution iſſued againſt part of his perſonals, his real eſtate is unincumbered and free—beſides, you ſee he does not mind it a whit, but is as alert, and as merry, as a defendant after non-ſuiting a plaintiff for omitting an S.

Char. O, Sir! I know how proud Sir Luke is of his leg, and have often heard him declare, that he would not change his bit of timber for the beſt fleſh and bone in the kingdom.

Serj. There's a hero for you!

Char. To be ſure, ſuſtaining unavoidable evils with conſtancy is a certain ſign of greatneſs of mind.

Serj. Doubtleſs.

Char. But then to derive a vanity from a misfortune, will not I'm afraid be admitted as a vaſt inſtance of wiſdom, and indeed looks as if the man had nothing better to diſtinguiſh himſelf by.

Serj. How does that follow?

Char. By innuendo.

Serj. Negatur.

Char. Beſides, Sir, I have other proofs of your hero's vanity, not inferior to that I have mentioned.

Serj. Cite them.

Char. The paltry ambition of leveeing and following titles.

Serj. Titles! I don't underſtand you?

Char. I mean the poverty of faſtening in public upon men of diſtinction, for no other reaſon but becauſe of their rank; adhering to Sir John till the Baronet is ſuperſeded by my Lord; quitting the puny Peer for an Earl; and ſacrificing all three to a Duke.

Serj. Keeping good company! a laudable ambition!

Char. True, Sir, if the virtues that procured the father a peerage could with that be entail'd on the ſon.

Serj. Have a care, huſſy—there are ſevere laws againſt ſpeaking evil of dignities.

Char. Sir?

Serj. Scandalum magnatum is a ſtatute muſt not be trifled with: why, you are not one of thoſe vulgar ſluts that think a man the worſe for being a Lord?

Char. No, Sir; I am contented with only, not thinking him the better.

Serj. For all this, I believe, huſſy, a right honourable propoſal would ſoon make you alter your mind.

Char. Not unleſs the propoſer had other qualities than what he poſſeſſes by patent. Beſides, Sir, you know Sir Luke is a devotee to the bottle.

Serj. Not a whit the leſs honeſt for that.

Char. It occaſions one evil at leaſt; that, when under its influence, he generally reveals all, ſometimes more than he knows.

Serj. Proofs of an open temper, you baggage; but, come, come, all theſe are but trifling objections.

Char. You mean, Sir, they prove the object a trifle.

Serj. Why, you pert jade, do you play on my words? I ſay Sir Luke is—

Char. Nobody.

Serj. Nobody! how the duce do you make that out?—He is neither perſon attainted or outlaw'd, may in any of his Majeſty's courts ſue or be ſued, appear by attorney, or in propria perſona, can acquire, buy, procure, purchaſe, poſſeſs, and inherit, not only perſonalities, ſuch as goods, and chattels, but even realities, as all lands, tenements, and hereditaments, whatſoever, and whereſoever.

Char. But, Sir—

Serj. Nay, further, child, he may ſell, give, beſtow, bequeath,

queath, deviſe, demiſe, leaſe, or to farm let, ditto lands, or to any perſon whomſoever—and—

Char. Without doubt, Sir; but there are notwithſtanding in this town a great number of nobodies, not deſcribed by Lord Coke.

Serj. Hey!

Char. There is your next-door neighbour, Sir Harry Hen, an abſolute blank.

Serj. How ſo, Mrs Pert?

Char. What, Sir! a man who is not ſuffered to hear, ſee, ſmell, or in ſhort to enjoy the free uſe of any one of his ſenſes; who, inſtead of having a poſitive will of his own, is denied even a paltry negative; who can neither reſolve or reply, conſent or deny, without firſt obtaining the leave of his lady: an abſolute monarch to ſink into the ſneaking ſtate of being a ſlave to one of his ſubjects—Oh fie!

Serj. Why, to be ſure, Sir Harry Hen is, as I may ſay—

Char. Nobody, Sir, in the fulleſt ſenſe of the word—Then your client Lord Solo.

Serj. Heyday!—why, you would not annihilate a peer of the realm, with a prodigious eſtate, and an allowed judge too of the elegant arts.

Char. O yes, Sir, I am no ſtranger to that nobleman's attributes; but then, Sir, pleaſe to conſider, his power as a peer he gives up to a proxy; the direction of his eſtate, to a rapacious, artful attorney: and as to his ſkill in the elegant arts, I preſume you confine them to painting and muſic, he is directed in the firſt by Mynheer Van Eiſel, a Dutch dauber; and in the laſt is but the echo of Signora Florenza, his Lordſhip's miſtreſs and an opera ſinger.

Serj. Mercy upon us! at what a rate the jade runs!

Char. In ſhort, Sir, I define every individual who, ceaſing to act for himſelf, becomes the tool, the mere engine of another man's will, to be nothing more than a cypher.

Serj. At this rate the jade will half unpeople the world: but what is all this to Sir Luke? to him, not one of your caſes apply.

Char. Every one—Sir Luke has not a firſt principle in his whole compoſition; not only his pleaſures, but even his paſſions are prompted by others; and he is as much directed to the objects of his love and his hatred, as in his eating, drinking, and dreſſing. Nay, though he is active,

and

and eternally buſy, yet his own private affairs are neglected; and he would not ſcruple to break an appointment that was to determine a conſiderable part of his property, in order to exchange a couple of hounds for a lord, or to buy a pad-nag for a lady. In a word—but he's at hand, and will explain himſelf beſt; I hear his ſtump on the ſtairs.

Serj. I hope you will preſerve a little decency before your lover at leaſt.

Char. Lover! ha, ha, ha!

Enter Sir Luke Limp.

Sir Luke. Mr Serjeant, your ſlave—Ah! are you there my little—O Lord! Miſs, let me tell you ſomething for fear of forgetting—Do you know that you are new chriſtened, and have had me for a goſſip?

Char. Chriſtened! I don't underſtand you.

Sir Luke. Then lend me your ear—Why, laſt night, as Colonel Kill'em, Sir William Weezy, Lord Frederick Foretop, and I were careleſsly ſliding the Ranelagh round, picking our teeth, after a damn'd muzzy dinner at Boodle's, who ſhould trip by but an abbeſs, well known about town, with a ſmart little nun in her ſuite. Says Weezy (who, between ourſelves, is as huſky as hell), Who is that? odds fleſh, ſhe's a delicate wench! Zounds! cried Lord Frederick, where can Weezy have been, not to have ſeen the Harietta before! for you muſt know Frederick is a bit of Macaroni, and adores the ſoft Italian termination in *a*.

Char. He does.

Sir Luke. Yes, a dilettante all over.—Before! replied Weezy; cruſh me if ever I ſaw any thing half ſo handſome before!—No! replied I in an inſtant; Colonel, what will Weezy ſay when he ſees the Charlotta?—Hey! you little—

Char. Meaning me, I preſume.

Sir Luke. Without doubt; and you have been toaſted by that name ever ſince.

Serj. What a vaſt fund of ſpirits he has!

Sir Luke. And why not, my old ſplitter of cauſes?

Serj. I was juſt telling Charlotte, that you was not a whit the worſe for the loſs.

Sir Luke. The worſe, much the better, my dear. Conſider, I can have neither ſtrain, ſplint, ſpavin, or gout; have

have no fear of corns, kibes, or that another man ſhould kick my ſhins, or tread on my toes.

Serj. Right.

Sir Luke. What, d'ye think I would change with Bill Spindle for one of his drumſticks, or chop with Lord Lumber for both of his logs?

Serj. No!

Sir Luke. No, damn it, I am much better.—Look there—ha!—what is there I am not able to do? To be ſure I am a little aukward at running; but then, to make me amends, I'll hop with any man in town for his ſum.

Serj. Ay, and I'll go his halves.

Sir Luke. Then as to your dancing, I am cut out at Madam Cornelly's, I grant, becauſe of the croud; but as far as a private ſet of ſix couple, or moving a chair-minuet, match me who can.

Char. A chair-minuet! I don't underſtand you.

Sir Luke. Why, child, all grace is confined to the motion of the head, arms, and cheſt, which may fitting be as fully diſplayed, as if one had as many legs as a polypus.—As thus—tol de rol—don't you ſee.

Serj. Very plain.

Sir Luke. A leg! a redundancy! a mere nothing at all. Man is from nature an extravagant creature. In my opinion, we might all be full as well as we are, with but half the things that we have.

Char. Ay, Sir Luke! how do you prove that?

Sir Luke. By conſtant experience.—You muſt have ſeen the man who makes and uſes pens without hands.

Serj. I have.

Sir Luke. And not a twelvemonth ago, I loſt my way in a fog, at Mile-End, and was conducted to my houſe in May-Fair by a man as blind as a beetle.

Serj. Wonderful!

Sir Luke. And as to hearing and ſpeaking, thoſe organs are of no manner of uſe in the world.

Serj. How!

Sir Luke. If you doubt it, I will introduce you to a whole family dumb as oyſters, and deaf as the dead, who chatter from morning till night by only the help of their fingers.

Serj. Why, Charlotte, theſe are caſes in point.

Sir Luke. Oh! clear as a trout-ſtream; and it is not only,

only, my little Charlotte, that this piece of timber anſwers every purpoſe, but it has procured me many a bit of fun in my time.

Serj. Ay!

Sir Luke. Why, it was but laſt ſummer, at Tunbridge, we were plagued the whole ſeaſon by a bullet-headed Swiſs from the canton of Bern, who was always boaſting, what, and how much he dared do; and then, as to pain, no Stoic, not Diogenes, held it more in contempt. By gods, he vas no more minds it dan nothings at all—So, foregad, I gave my German a challenge.

Serj. As how?—mind Charlotte.

Sir Luke. Why, to drive a corkin pin into the calves of our legs.

Serj. Well, well.

Sir Luke. Mine, you may imagine, was eaſily done—but when it came to the Baron—

Serj. Ay, ay.

Sir Luke. Our modern Cato ſoon loſt his coolneſs and courage, ſcrew'd his noſe up to his foretop, rapp'd out a dozen oaths in high Dutch, limp'd away to his lodgings, and was there laid up for a month—ha, ha, ha!

Enter a Servant, and delivers a card to Sir Luke.

Sir Luke reads. "Sir Gregory Gooſe deſires the honour "of Sir Luke Limp's company to dine. An anſwer is "deſired." Gadſo! a little unlucky; I have been engag'd for theſe three weeks.

Serj. What, I find Sir Gregory is return'd for the corporation of Fleecem.

Sir Luke. Is he ſo? Oh ho!—That alters the caſe.—George, give my compliments to Sir Gregory, and I'll certainly come and dine there. Order Joe to run to Alderman Inkle's, in Threadneedle-ſtreet; ſorry can't wait upon him, but confin'd to bed two days with the *new influenza.*

[*Exit Servant.*

Char. You make light, Sir Luke, of theſe ſort of engagements.

Sir Luke. What can a man do? Theſe damn'd fellows (when one has the misfortune to meet them) take ſcandalous advantage; teaze, When will you do me the honour, pray, Sir Luke, to take a bit of mutton with me! Do you name the day.—They are as bad as a beggar, who attacks

tacks your coach at the mounting of a hill; there is no getting rid of them, without a penny to one, and a promiſe to t'other.

Serj. True; and then for ſuch a time too—three weeks! I wonder they expect folks to remember. It is like a retainer in Michaelmas term for the ſummer aſſizes.

Sir Luke. Not but, upon theſe occaſions, no man in England is more punctual than——

Enter a Servant, who gives Sir Luke *a Letter.*

From whom?

Serv. Earl of Brentford. The ſervant waits for an anſwer.

Sir Luke. Anſwer!—By your leave, Mr Serjeant and Charlotte. [*Reads.*] "Taſte for muſic—Monſ. Duport—"fail—Dinner upon table at five"—Gadſo! I hope Sir Gregory's ſervant an't gone.

Serv. Immediately upon receiving the anſwer.

Sir Luke. Run after him as faſt as you can—tell him, quite in deſpair—recollect an engagement that can't in nature be miſſed,—and return in an inſtant. [*Exit Servant.*

Char. You ſee, Sir, the Knight muſt give way for my Lord.

Sir Luke. No, faith, it is not that, my dear Charlotte; you ſaw that was quite an extempore buſineſs.—No, hang it, no, it is not for the title; but to tell you the truth, Brentford has more wit than any man in the world; it is that makes me fond of his houſe.

Char. By the choice of his company he gives an unanſwerable inſtance of that.

Sir Luke. You are right, my dear girl. But now to give you a proof of his wit: You know Brentford's finances are a little out of repair, which procures him ſome viſits that he would very gladly excuſe.

Serj. What need he fear? His perſon is ſacred; for by the tenth of William and Mary—

Sir Luke. He knows that well enough; but for all that—

Serj. Indeed, by a late act of his own houſe, (which does them infinite honour) his goods or chattels may be—

Sir Luke. Seized upon when they can find them; but he lives in ready furniſh'd lodgings, and hires his coach by the month.

Serj. Nay, if the ſheriff return "non inventus"—

Sir Luke,

Sir Luke. A pox o'your law, you make me loſe ſight of my ſtory. One morning a Welſh coachmaker came with his bill to my Lord, whoſe name was unluckily Lloyd. My Lord had the man up. You are call'd, I think, Mr Lloyd?—At your Lordſhip's ſervice, my Lord.—What, Lloyd with an L?—It was with an L indeed, my Lord.—Becauſe in your part of the world I have heard that Lloyd and Flloyd were ſynonymous, the very ſame names.—Very often indeed, my Lord.—But you always ſpell your's with an L?—Always.—That, Mr Lloyd, is a little unlucky; for you muſt know I am now paying my debts alphabetically, and in four or five years you might have come in with an F; but I am afraid I can give you no hopes for your L.—Ha, ha, ha!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. There was no overtaking the ſervant.

Sir Luke. That is unlucky: tell my Lord I'll attend him. I'll call on Sir Gregory myſelf. [*Exit Servant.*

Serj. Why, you won't leave us, Sir Luke?

Sir Luke. Pardon, dear Serjeant and Charlotta; have a thouſand things to do for half a million of people poſitively; promiſed to procure a huſband for Lady Cicely Sulky, and match a coach-horſe for Brigadier Whip; after that muſt run into the city to borrow a thouſand for young At-all at Almack's; ſend a Cheſhire cheeſe by the ſtage to Sir Timothy Tankard in Suffolk; and get at the Herald's Office a coat of arms to clap on the coach of Billy Bengal, a nabob newly arrived: ſo you ſee I have not a moment to loſe.

Serj. True, true.

Sir Luke. At your toilet to-morrow you may—

Enter a Servant abruptly, and runs againſt Sir Luke.

Can't you ſee where you are running, you raſcal!

Serv. Sir, his grace the Duke of—

Sir Luke. Grace!—Where is he?—Where—

Serv. In his coach at the door.—If you an't better engaged would be glad of your company to go into the city, and take a dinner at Dolly's.

Sir Luke. In his own coach, did you ſay?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Sir Luke. With the coronets—or—

Serv. I believe ſo.

Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. There's no reſiſting of that.—Bid Joe run to Sir Gregory Gooſe's.

Serv. He is already gone to Alderman Inkle's.

Sir Luke. Then do you ſtep to the Knight—hey!—no—you muſt go to my Lord's—hold, hold, no—I have it—Step firſt to Sir Greg's, then pop in at Lord Brentford's juſt as the company are going to dinner.

Serv. What ſhall I ſay to Sir Gregory?

Sir Luke. Any thing—what I told you before.

Serv. And what to my Lord?

Sir Luke. What!—Why, tell him that my uncle from Epſom—no—that won't do, for he knows I don't care a farthing for him—hey!—why tell him—hold, I have it—tell him, that as I was going into my chair to obey his commands, I was arreſted by a couple of bailiffs, forced into a hackney coach, and carried to the Pied Bull in the Borough; I beg ten thouſand pardons for making his Grace wait, but his Grace knows my misfor——

[*Exeunt Sir* Luke *and Servant.*

Char. Well, Sir, what dy'e think of the proofs? I flatter myſelf I have pretty well eſtabliſhed my caſe.

Serj. Why, huſſy, you have hit upon points; but then they are but trifling flaws, they don't vitiate the title, that ſtands unimpeached; and—But, Madam, your mother.

Enter Mrs Circuit.

Mrs Circ. What have you done with the Knight?—Why, you have not let him depart?

Char. It was not in my power to keep him.

Mrs Circ. I don't wonder at that; but what took him away?

Char. What will at any time take him away—a Duke at the door.

Mrs Circ. Are you certain of that?

Serj. Why truly, chuck, his retreat was rather precipitate for a man that is juſt going to be married.

Mrs Circ. The proſpect of marriage does not always prove the ſtrongeſt attachment.

Serj. Pardon me, lovee; the law allows no higher conſideration than marriage.

Mrs Circ. Pſhaw!

Serj. Inſomuch, that if duke A was to intermarry with

chambermaid B, difference of condition would prove no bar to the ſettlement.

Mrs Circ. Indeed!

Serj. Ay; and this was held to be law by Chief Baron Bind'em, on the famous caſe of the Marquis of Cully, and Fanny Flip-flap the French dancer.

Mrs Circ. The greater blockhead the Baron: but don't peſter me with your odious law caſes. Did not you tell me you was going to Kingſton to-day to try the Crown cauſes?

Serj. I was begg'd to attend for fear his Lordſhip ſhould not be able to ſit; but if it proves inconvenient to you—

Mrs Circ. To me! Oh, by no means in the world; I am too good a ſubject to deſire the leaſt delay in the law's execution: and when d'ye ſet out?

Serj. Between one and two; I ſhall only juſt give a law lecture to Jack.

Mrs Circ. Lord! I wonder, Mr Circuit, you would breed that boy up to the bar.

Serj. Why not, chuck? He has fine ſteady parts, and for his time moots a point—

Mrs Circ. Steady! ſtupid you mean: nothing ſure could add to his heavineſs but the being loaded with law. Why don't you put him into the army?

Serj. Nay, chuck, if you chuſe it, I believe I have intereſt to get Jack a commiſſion.

Mrs Circ. Why, Mr Circuit, you know he is no ſon of mine; perhaps a cockade may animate the lad with ſome fire.

Serj. True, lovee; and a knowledge of the law mayn't be amiſs to reſtrain his fire a little.

Mrs Circ. I believe there is very little danger of his exceeding that way.

Serj. Charlotte, ſend hither your brother.

[*Exit* Charlotte.

Mrs Circ. I'll not interrupt you.

Serj. Far from it, lovee; I ſhould be glad to have you a witneſs of Jacky's improvement.

Mrs Circ. Of that I am no judge; beſides, I am full of buſineſs to-day—there is to be a ballot at one for the Ladies Club lately eſtabliſhed, and lady Bab Baſto has propoſed me for a member. Pray, my dear, when will you let me have that money to pay my Lord Loo?

Serj.

Serj. The three hundred you mean?

Mrs Circ. And beſides, there is my debt to Kitty Cribbidge; I proteſt I almoſt bluſh whenever I meet them.

Serj. Why, really, lovee, 'tis a large ſum of money.—Now, were I worthy to throw in a little advice, we might make a pretty good hand of this buſineſs.

Mrs Circ. I don't underſtand you.

Serj. Bring an action againſt them on the ſtatute, in the name of my clerk; and ſo not only reſcue the debt from their hands, but recover likewiſe conſiderable damages.

Mrs Circ. A pretty conceit, Mr Serjeant! but does it not occur to your wiſdom, that as I have (by the help of Captain Cog) been oftner a winner than loſer, the tables may be turned upon us?

Serj. No, no, chuck, that did not eſcape me; I have provided for that. Do you know, by the law, both parties are equally culpable; ſo that, lovee, we ſhall be able to fleece your friends not only of what they have won of poor dearee, but likewiſe for what they have loſt.

Mrs Circ. Why, what a paltry, pettifogging puppy art thou! And could you ſuppoſe that I would ſumbit to the ſcandalous office?

Serj. Scandalous! I don't underſtand this perverſion of words. The ſcandal lies in breaking the laws, not in bringing the offenders to juſtice.

Mrs Circ. Mean-ſpirited wretch!—What, do you ſuppoſe that thoſe laws could be levell'd againſt people of their high rank and condition? Can it be thought that any ſet of men would ſubmit to lay legal reſtraints on themſelves?—Abſurd and prepoſterous!

Serj. Why, by their public practice, my love, one would ſuſpect that they thought themſelves excepted by a particular clauſe.

Mrs Circ. Oh! to be ſure; not the leaſt doubt can be made.

Serj. True, chuck—but then your great friends ſhould never complain of highwaymen ſtopping their coaches, or thieves breaking into their houſes.

Mrs Circ. Why, what has that to do with the buſineſs?

Serj. Oh! the natural conſequence, lovee; for whilſt the ſuperiors are throwing away their fortunes, and conſequently their independence above—you can't think but their domeſtics are following their examples below.

Mrs Circ.

Mrs Circ. Well, and what then?

Serj. Then! the ſame diſtreſs that throws the maſter and miſtreſs into the power of any who are willing to purchaſe them, by a regular gradation, ſeduces the ſervants to actions, tho' more criminal, perhaps not more atrocious.

Mrs Circ. Pſhaw! ſtuff!—I have no need to examine your dirty diſtinctions—Don't teize me with your jargon.—I have told you the ſums I ſhall want, ſo take care they are ready at your returning from Kingſton.—Nay, don't heſitate; recollect your own ſtate of the caſe, and remember, my honour is in pawn, and muſt, ſome way or other, be redeem'd by the end of the week. [*Exit.*

Serj. My honour is in pawn!—Good Lord! how a century will alter the meaning of words!—Formerly, chaſtity was the honour of women, and good faith and integrity the honour of men: but now, a lady who ruins her family by punctually paying her loſſes at play, and a gentleman who kills his beſt friend in ſome trifling frivolous quarrel, are your only tip-top people of honour. Well, let them go on, it brings griſt to our mill: for whilſt both the ſexes ſtick firm to their honour, we ſhall never want buſineſs, either at Doctors Commons, or the Old Bailey. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Enter Serjeant Circuit *and* Jack.

Serj. JACK, let Will bring the chaiſe to the door.

Jack. Mr Fairplay, Sir, the attorney, begs to ſpeak a few words.

Serj. How often have I told you, that I will ſee none of theſe ſort of folks but at chambers; you know how angry your mother is at their rapping, and littering the houſe.

Jack. He ſays, Sir, he will not detain you five minutes.

Serj. Well, bid him walk in.

Enter Fairplay.

Serj. Well, Mr Fairplay, what's your will?

Fairp. I juſt call'd, Mr Serjeant, to know your opinion upon

upon the caſe of young Woodford, and if you like the propoſal of being concern'd.

Serj. If it turns out as you ſtate it, and that the father of the lad was really a minor, the Eſſex eſtate may without doubt be recover'd; and ſo may the lands in the north.

Fairp. We have full proofs to that fact.

Serj. May be ſo; but really, Mr Fairplay, you know the length of time that theſe kind of ſuits—

Fairp. True, Sir, but then your experience will ſhorten I appreh—

Serj. That's more than I know: and then not only my fees lying dormant, but, perhaps, an expectation of money to be advanced.

Fairp. The property, Sir, is of very great value, and, upon the recovery, any acknowledgement ſhall be readily made.

Serj. There [illegible] any! do you know that in law, that word any has no meaning at all? Beſides, when people are in diſtreſs, they are laviſh enough of their offers; but when their buſineſs is done, then we have nothing but grumbling and grudging.

Fairp. You have only to dictate your terms.

Serj. Does the lad live in town?

Fairp. He has been under my care ſince the death of his father; I have given him as good an education as my narrow fortune would let me; he is now ſtudying the law in the Temple, in hopes that, ſhould he fail of other aſſiſtance, he may be able one day to do himſelf juſtice.

Serj. In the Temple?

Fairp. Yes, Sir, in thoſe little chambers juſt over your head—I fancy the young gentleman knows him.

Jack. Who? Mr Woodford! Lord, as well as myſelf, he is a ſweet ſober youth, and will one day make a vaſt figure, I am ſure.

Serj. Indeed!

Jack. I am poſitive, Sir, if you were to hear him ſpeak at the Robinhood in the Butcher-row, you would ſay ſo yourſelf: why, he is now reckon'd the third; except the breeches-maker from Barbican, and Sawny Sinclair the ſnuffman, there is not a mortal can touch him.

Serj. Peace, puppy; well, Mr Fairplay, leave the papers a little longer with me and—pray who is employed againſt you?

Fairp.

Fairp. A city attorney, one Sheepſkin.

Serj. A cunning fellow, I know him; well, Sir, if you will call at Pump-court in a week.

Fairp. I ſhall attend you.

Serj. Jack, open the door for Mr.—[*Exeunt* Fairplay *and* Jack.] Something may be made of this matter; I'll ſee this Sheepſkin myſelf. So much in future for carrying on the ſuit, or ſo much in hand to make it miſcarry: a wiſe man ſhould well weigh which party to take for.

Enter Jack.

So Jack, any body at chambers to day?

Jack. Fieri Facias from Fetter-lane, about the bill to be filed by Kit Crape againſt Will Vizard, this term.

Serj. Praying for an equal partition of plunder?

Jack. Yes, Sir.

Serj. Strange world we live in, that even highwaymen can't be true to each other! [*half aſide to himſelf.*] but we ſhall make Maſter Vizard refund, we'll ſhew him what long hands the law has.

Jack. Facias ſays, that in all the books he can't hit on a precedent.

Serj. Then I'll make one myſelf; *aut inveniam, aut faciam*, has been always my motto. The charge muſt be made for partnerſhip-profit, by bartering lead and gunpowder, againſt money, watches, and rings, on Epping-foreſt, Hounſlow-heath, and other parts of the kingdom.

Jack. He ſays, if the court ſhould get ſcent of the ſcheme, the parties would all ſtand committed.

Serj. Cowardly raſcal! but however, the caution mayn't prove amiſs. [*Aſide.*] I'll not put my own name to the bill.

Jack. The declaration too is delivered in the cauſe of Roger Rapp'em againſt Sir Solomon Simple.

Serj. What, the affair of the note?

Jack. Yes.

Serj. Why, he is clear that his client never gave ſuch a note.

Jack. Defendant never ſaw plaintiff ſince the hour he was born; but, notwithſtanding, they have three witneſſes to prove a conſideration, and ſigning the note.

Serj. They have?

Jack. He is puzzled what plea to put in.

Serj. Three witneſſes ready, you ſay?

Jack.

Jack. Yes.

Serj. Tell him Simple muſt acknowledge the note, [Jack *ſtarts.*] and bid him, againſt the trial comes on, to procure four perſons at leaſt to prove the payment, at the Crown and Anchor, the 10th of December.

Jack. But then how comes the note to remain in plaintiff's poſſeſſion?

Serj. Well put, Jack; but we have a ſalvo for that; plaintiff happen'd not to have the note in his pocket, but promiſed to deliver it up, when call'd thereunto by defendant.

Jack. That will do rarely.

Serj. Let the defence be a ſecret, for I ſee we have able people to deal with. But come, child, not to loſe time, have you carefully conn'd thoſe inſtructions I gave you?

Jack. Yes, Sir.

Serj. Well, that we ſhall ſee. How many points are the great object of practice?

Jack. Two.

Serj. Which are they?

Jack. The firſt is to put a man in poſſeſſion of what is his right.

Serj. The ſecond?

Jack. Either to deprive a man of what is really his right, or to keep him as long as poſſible out of poſſeſſion.

Serj. Good boy! To gain the laſt end, what are the beſt means to be uſed?

Jack. Various and many are the legal modes of delay.

Serj. Name them.

Jack. Injunctions, demurrers, ſham-pleas, writs of error, rejoinders, ſur-rejoinders, rebutters, ſur-rebutters, replications, exceptions, eſſoigns, and imparlance.

Serj. [*To himſelf.*] Fine inſtruments in the hands of a man who knows how to uſe them.—But now, Jack, we come to the point: if an able advocate has his choice in a cauſe (which if he is in reputation he may readily have), which ſide ſhould he chuſe, the right, or the wrong?

Jack. A great lawyer's buſineſs, is always to make choice of the wrong.

Serj. And prithee why ſo?

Jack. Becauſe a good cauſe can ſpeak for itſelf, whilſt a bad one demands an able counſellor to give it a colour.

Serj.

Serj. Very well. But in what reſpects will this anſwer to the lawyer himſelf?

Jack. In a two-fold way; firſtly, his fees will be large in proportion to the dirty work he is to do.

Serj. Secondly?—

Jack. His reputation will riſe, by obtaining the victory in a deſperate cauſe.

Serj. Right boy.—Are you ready in the cauſe of the cow?

Jack. Pretty well, I believe.

Serj. Give it then.

Jack. Firſt of April, anno ſeventeen hundred and blank, John a Nokes was indicted by blank, before blank, in the county of blank, for ſtealing a cow, contra pacem etcet.—And againſt the ſtatute in that caſe provided and made, to prevent ſtealing of cattle.

Serj. Go on.

Jack. Said Nokes was convicted upon the ſaid ſtatute.

Serj. What follow'd upon?—

Jack. Motion in arreſt of judgement, made by Counſellor Puzzle. Firſt, becauſe the field from whence the cow was convey'd is laid in the indictment as round, but turn'd out upon proof to be ſquare.

Serj. That's well: a valid objection.

Jack. Secondly, becauſe in ſaid indictment the colour of the cow is called red, there being no ſuch things in rerum natura as red cows, no more than black lions, ſpread eagles, flying griffins, or blue boars.

Serj. Well put.

Jack. Thirdly, ſaid Nokes has not offended againſt form of the ſtatute; becauſe ſtealing of cattle is there provided againſt: whereas we are only convicted of ſtealing a cow. Now, though cattle may be cows, yet it does by no means follow that cows muſt be cattle.

Serj. Bravo, bravo! buſs me, you rogue; you are your father's own ſon! go on, and proſper. I am ſorry, dear Jack, I muſt leave thee. If providence but ſends thee life and health, I propheſy, thou wilt wreſt as much land from the owners, and ſave as many thieves from the gallows, as any practitioner ſince the days of King Alfred.

Jack. I'll do my endeavour. [*Exit* Serjeant.] So!—father is ſet off. Now if I can but lay eyes on our Charlotte,

lotte, juſt to deliver this letter before Madam comes home. There ſhe is.—Hiſt, ſiſter Charlotte!

Enter Charlotte.

Char. What have you got there, Jack?

Jack. Something for you, ſiſter.

Char. For me! prithee, what is it?

Jack. A thing.

Char. What thing?

Jack. A thing that will pleaſe you I'm ſure.

Char. Come, don't be a boy, let me have it. [*Jack gives the letter.*] How's this! a letter! from whom?

Jack. Can't you gueſs?

Char. Not I; I don't know the hand.

Jack. May be not; but you know the inditer.

Char. Then tell me his name.

Jack. Break open the ſeal, and you'll find it.

Char. [*Opening the letter.*] "Charles Woodford!"—I am ſure I know nothing of him.

Jack. Ay, but, ſiſter, you do.

Char. How! when, and where?

Jack. Don't you remember about three weeks ago, when you drank tea at our chambers, there was a young gentleman in a blue ſattin waiſtcoat, who wore his own head of hair?

Char. Well?

Jack. That letter's from he.

Char. What can be his buſineſs with me?

Jack. Read that and you'll know.

Char. [*reads.*] "Want words to apologize—hum—"very firſt moment I ſaw you—hum, hum—ſmother'd "long in my breaſt—hum, hum—happieſt, or elſe the "moſt wretched of men."—So, Sir, you have undertaken a pretty commiſſion! and what do you think my father will—

Jack. Why, I hope you won't go for to tell him.

Char. Indeed, Sir, but I ſhall.

Jack. No, ſiſter, I'm ſure you won't be ſo croſs. Beſides, what could I do? The poor young lad begg'd ſo hard; and there for this fortnight he has gone about ſighing, and muſing, and moping: I am ſatisfied it would melt you to ſee him. Do, ſiſter, let me bring him this evening, now father is out.

Char. Upon my word!—The young man has made no bad choice of an agent; you are for puſhing matters at once.—But harkee, Sir, who is this ſpark you are ſo anxious about? And how long have you known him?

Jack. Oh! a prodigious long while: above a month I am certain. Don't you think him mighty genteel? I aſſure you he is vaſtly liked by the ladies.

Char. He is.

Jack. Yes, indeed, Mrs Congo, at the Grecian coffee-houſe, ſays, he's the ſobereſt youth that comes to the houſe; and all Mrs Mittens's 'prentices throw down their work, and run to the window every time he goes by.

Char. Upon my word!

Jack. And moreover, beſides that, he has ſeveral great eſtates in the country, but only for the preſent, he is kept out of 'em all by the owners.

Char. Ah, Jack! that's the worſt part of the ſtory.

Jack. Pſhaw! that's nothing at all. His guardian, Mr Fairplay, has been with father to-day, and ſays, he is certain that he can ſet all to rights in a trice.

Char. Well, Jack, when that point is determined, it will be time enough to—

Jack. Then, Lord of mercy! why, ſiſter Charlotte, it is my private opinion, that if you don't give him ſome crumbs of comfort, he wont live till Midſummer term.

Char. I warrant you. Either Cupid's darts were always but poetical engines, or they have been lately deprived of their points. Love holds no place in the modern bills of mortality. However, Jack, you may tell your friend, that I have obſerved his frequent walks in our ſtreet.

Jack. Walks! Why one ſhould think he was appointed to relieve the old watchman; for no ſooner one is off, but the other comes on.

Char. And that from his eyes being conſtantly fixed on my window (for the information of which, I preſume, he is indebted to you.)—

Jack. he! he! he!

Char. I had a pretty ſhrewd gueſs at his buſineſs; but tell him, that unleſs my fa— Huſh! our tyrant is return'd.—Don't leave the houſe till I ſee you.

Enter Mrs Circuit *and* Betty.

Mrs Circ. So, Sir, what makes you loitering from chambers?

bers? I thought I told you, you ſhould never be here but at meals? [*Exit* Jack.] One ſpy is enough in a family.—Miſs, you may go to your room; and d'ye hear—I ſhall have company, ſo you need not come down. [*Exit* Charlotte.]—Betty, no meſſage or letter?

Betty. None, Madam.

Mrs Circ. That is amazing!—You know I expect Colonel Secret and Mrs Simper every inſtant.

Betty. Yes, Madam.

Mrs Circ. Put the fruit and the wine on the table in the next room.

Betty. Very well, Madam.

Mrs Circ. And, Betty, order the fellow to let nobody in but Sir Luke.

Betty. Madam, I ſhall take care. [*Exit.*

Mrs Circ. [*ſits down*] The ballot muſt be over by this time. Sure there is nothing ſo dreadful as a ſtate of ſuſpence: but ſhould they black-ball me!—No, there's no danger of that; Miſs Mattadore has inſured me ſucceſs.—Well, this is certainly one of the moſt uſeful inſtitutions; it poſitively ſupplies the only point of time one does not know how to employ. From twelve, the hour of one's riſing, to dinner, is a moſt horrible chaſm; for though teizing the mercers and milliners, by tumbling their wares, is now and then an entertaining amuſement, yet upon repetition it palls.—But every morning to be ſure of a party, and then again at night after a rout, to have a place to retire to; to be quite freed from all pain of providing; not to be peſter'd at table with the odious company of clients, and country couſins; for I am determined to dine, and ſup at the club, every day. I can tell 'em, they'll have but very few forfeits from me.

Enter Betty, *in haſte, with a letter.*

Betty. By a chairman, Madam, from the Thatch'd-Houſe.

Mrs Circ. Give it me, Betty, this inſtant;—ay—this is Mattadore's hand. [*Opens and reads the letter.*] "My "dear Circuit—it is with the utmoſt concern, and confu-"ſion, I find myſelf obliged to acquaint you, that notwith-"ſtanding all the pains I have taken, the club have thought "fit to reject"——Oh! [*She faints.*]

Betty. Bleſs my ſoul! my lady is gone!—John! Will! Kitty! run hither this inſtant.—

Enter

Enter two Maids and a Man Servant.

All. What, what's the matter?

Betty. Quick! quick! ſome hartſhorn and water [*parts her hand.*] Madam! Madam—

Serv. Here! here! here! [*bringing water.*

Betty. John, go for the *potter-carrier* this inſtant—I believes to my ſoul ſhe is dead—Kitty, fetch ſome feathers to burn under her noſe;—there, ſtand further off, and give her ſome air— [*Exeunt* John *and* Kitty.

Enter Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. Heyday! what the deuce is the matter? What's the meaning of all this, Mrs Betty?

Betty. Oh! Sir, is it you—my poor lady! [*cries*] clap the bottle hard to her noſe.

Sir Luke. But how came it about?

Betty. Some of the continents of that cura'd letter, ſhe has there in her hand.

Sir Luke. Here, here, take ſome of my eau-de-luce. [*offering a bottle.*]

Betty. There! ſhe recovers a little—ſome water—I believe it is nothing but a ſatirical fit, I have had them myſelf—now ſhe opens her eyes—ſo, ſo—bend her forward a little.

Sir Luke. My ſweet Mrs Circuit.

Mrs Circ. Who is that!

Betty. Nobody at all, Madam, but only Sir Luke.

Mrs Circ. Oh! Sir Luke, ſuch a ſtroke, ſo fatal, ſo ſudden, it is not in nature I ſhould ever ſurvive it.

Sir Luke. Marry, heaven forbid! but what cauſe—what could—

Mrs Circ. Leave the room. [*To the ſervants, who go out.*] —Only, look over that letter.

Sir Luke. Hum, hum,—[*reads*] "fit to reject you"—this—

Mrs Circ. There! there! there!

Sir Luke. I own this is the utmoſt malice of fortune—but let me finiſh the letter.—"This calamity, dear Cir-"cuit, is of ſuch a nature as baffles all advice, or inter-"poſition of friends, I ſhall therefore leave you to time, "and your own good underſtanding," [*pretty and ſenſible*] —"yours," &c.—But let us ſee, what ſays the poſtſcript [*reads.*

—[*reads.*] "Perhaps it may give you ſome comfort to "know that you had ſixteen almonds, and but two raiſins "againſt you."

Mrs Circ. But two!

Sir Luke. No more!

Mrs Circ. This muſt be Kitty Cribbage's doing, ſhe has been tattling about the paultry trifle I owe her.

Sir Luke. Not unlikely: but come, bear up, my dear Madam, and conſider that two—

Mrs Circ. Is as bad as two thouſand.

Sir Luke. Granted; but perhaps it mayn't be too late to repair.—Gadſo! I have thought of a ſcheme—I'll be elected myſelf, and then I warrant we manage—

Mrs Circ. You, Sir Luke? That never can be.

Sir Luke. No, Madam, and why not? Why, you don't ſuppoſe that they would venture to—

Mrs Circ. It would not only be againſt the ſpirit, but the very letter of their conſtitution to chuſe a member.

Sir Luke. Ay, Madam, how ſo?

Mrs Circ. Their ſtatutes are ſelected from all the codes that ever exiſted from the days of Lycurgus to the preſent Czarina.

Sir Luke. Well.

Mrs Circ. The law that relates to your caſe they have borrow'd from the Roman religion.

Sir Luke. As how?

Mrs Circ. As no man can be admitted a Monk, who has the leaſt corporal ſpot, or defect; ſo, no candidate can be received as a member who is deprived of the uſe of any one of his limbs.

Sir Luke. Nay, then indeed I am clearly cut out; that incapacity can never be got over.

Mrs Circ. Indeed, the Serjeant ſays, if the club could be induced to reſolve in your favour, then the original law would ſignify nothing.

Sir Luke. Well, well, we'll ſee what can be done. [*A loud knocking.*] But huſh! the company's come; collect yourſelf, ſweet Mrs Circuit; don't give your enemies the malicious pleaſure of ſeeing how this diſappointment affects you.

Mrs Circ. Never fear; I know a little too much of the world not to turn this defeat to my credit.

Enter

Enter Col. Secret *and* Mrs Simper.

Mrs Sim. Your ſervant, Sir Luke; my dear Circuit, I am frighten'd to death—your people tell me, you are but juſt recovered from a—

Mrs Circ. Oh! nothing at all! a faintneſs, a kind of ſwimming—but thoſe people are ever ſwelling mole hills to mountains.

Mrs Sim. I proteſt I was afraid that you had ſuffer'd your late diſappointment to lay hold of your ſpirits.

Mrs Circ. What diſappointment, my dear?

Col. Mrs Simper hints at the little miſtake made this morning at the Thatch'd-Houſe.

Mrs Circ. That! ridiculous! I could have told you that a fortnight ago, child—all my own doing.

Mrs Sim. How!

Sir Luke. Entirely.

Mrs Circ. Oh! I always deteſted the thoughts of the thing;—they would put me up, let me ſay what I would, ſo I was reduced to the neceſſity of prevailing upon two friends to black-ball me.

Mrs Sim. That, indeed, alters the caſe.

Col. I am vaſtly happy to hear it: your old acquaintance were afraid they ſhould loſe you.

Mrs Circ. It is a ſign they know but little of me—but come, my good folks, I have prepared a ſmall collation in the next room, will you— [*Exeunt.*

Enter Jack *and* Woodford.

Jack. I'll watch ſiſter, to ſee that nobody comes; now, Woodford, make good uſe of your time. [*Exit* Woodford.] There, I have left 'em together; if I had ſtaid, I don't believe they would have open'd their mouths for a month; I never ſaw ſuch an alteration in a lad ſince the day I was born. Why, if I had not known him before, I ſhould not have thought he had a word to throw to a dog; but I remember the old proverb:

True lovers are ſhy,
When people are by.

I'll take a peep, to ſee how they go on:—there they are, juſt in the ſame poſture I left them; ſhe folding her fingers, and he twirling his hat; why they don't even look at

at each other: was there ever ſuch a couple of—ſtay, ſtay, now he opens his mouth—pſhaw!—lord! there he ſhuts it again—huſh! I hear ſomebody coming—no—nothing at all:—mother is ſafe I am ſure,—there is no danger from her—now let us take t'other—[*peeps at the door.*] hum! —gadſo, matters are mightily mended—there! there! very well—there he lays down the law—now he claps his hand on his heart—vaſtly pretty, I vow—there he ſwops with both his knees on the ground—charming!—and ſqueezes his hat with both hands, like one of the actors—delightful! ſhe wants him to riſe, and he won't—prodigious moving indeed!

Enter Betty.

Betty. So, Sir, what are you doing there?

Jack. There! where!

Betty. With your eyes glew'd cloſe to the key-hole.

Jack. I wanted to ſpeak a word to my ſiſter.

Betty. Then why don't you open her door?

Jack. I did not know but ſhe might be ſaying her prayers.

Betty. Prayers! a likely ſtory! who ſays their prayers at this time of the day?—No, no, that won't upon me.—Let me look—very pretty! So, ſo, I ſee there's ſomebody elſe at his prayers too—fine doings!—As ſoon as the company goes, I ſhall take care to inform Madam your mother.

Jack. Nay, but Mrs Betty, you won't be ſo—

Betty. Indeed, Mr John, but I ſhall—I'll ſwallow none of your ſecrets, believe me.

Jack. What, perhaps your ſtomach is overloaded already.

Betty. No matter for that, I ſhall be even with Miſs for telling maſter about and concerning my drums.

Jack. Why, Mrs Betty, ſurely ſiſter could not—

Betty. When ſhe very well knows that I have not ſent cards but twice the whole ſeaſon.

Jack. Lord! what ſigni——

Betty. What would ſhe ſay, if ſhe viſited the great families I do? For though I am, as I may ſay, but a commoner, no private gentlewoman's gentlewoman has a more prettier ſet of acquaintance.

Jack. Well, but—

Betty. My routs indeed!—There is Mrs Allſpice, who lives

lives with lady Cicely Sequence, has ſix tables every Sunday, beſides looers, and braggers; and moreover propoſes giving a maſquerade, the beginning of June, and I intends being there.

Jack. Well, but to talk calmly.

Betty. And as Miſs is ſo fond of fetching and carrying, you may tell her we are to have a private play among ourſelves, as the quality have: the Diſtruſtful Mother, 'tis call'd——Pylades, by Mr Thomas, Lord Cataſtrophe's butler—Hermione, Mrs Allſpice; and I ſhall do Andromache myſelf.

Jack. A play! lord, Mrs Betty, will you give me a ticket?

Betty. All's one for that—and ſo you may tell Miſs that—[*bell rings*] coming, Madam, this minute—and that, Mr John, is the long and the ſhort on't.—[*bell rings again*] Lord, I am coming. [*Exit.*

Enter Woodford *to* Jack.

Woodf. What's the matter?

Jack. Here, Betty, my mother's fac totum, has juſt diſcover'd your haunts; and is gone to lay an information againſt you—ſo depend upon it, a ſearch warrant will iſſue directly.

Woodf. Stay but a moment, till I take leave of your ſiſter.

Jack. Zooks! I tell you the conſtables will be here in a trice, ſo you have not a moment to loſe.

Woodf. How unlucky this is!

Jack. But I hope you have obtain'd a verdict however.

Woodf. No.

Jack. No!

Woodf. It would not have been decent, to have preſs'd the judge too ſoon for a ſentence.

Jack. Soon! You are a ninny, I tell you ſo:—here you will ſuffer judgement to go by default.—You are a pretty practitioner indeed!

Woodf. This, you may know, my dear Jack, is an equity caſe; I have but juſt fil'd my bill; one muſt give the parties time to put in an anſwer.

Jack. Time!—How you may come off in court I can't tell, but you will turn out but a poor chamber counſel I fear.—Well, come along, perhaps I may be able to procure

cure another hearing before it is—but, lord o' mercy! there is father croſſing the hall—ſhould he ſee us, all's over—we have nothing for't but taking ſhelter with ſiſter.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Sir Luke Limp, Mrs Circuit, Colonel Secret, *and* Mrs Simper, *diſcover'd at a table, with a collation before them.*

Mrs Circ. OH! by the bye, Sir Luke—take ſome of theſe ſweetmeats, my dear (*to* Mrs Simper)—did not you promiſe to introduce to me that little agreeable piece of imperfection that belongs to the opera?—Colonel won't you taſte the champaign?

Sir Luke. Who, Signior Piano?—Let me aſſiſt Mrs Simper.—Why, Madam, I made an attempt; but at preſent—ſhan't I ſend you a biſcuit?—he is in the poſſeſſion of a certain lady, who never ſuffers him out of her ſight for a moment.

Mrs Sim. Oh! the curmudgeon!—I am vaſtly fond of theſe cuſtards.

Sir Luke. Yes, they have a delicate flavour—but he promiſed, if poſſible, to eſcape for an hour—won't you? [*to* Mrs Circuit.]

Mrs Circ. No, it gives me the heart-burn—Then let us leave him a cover.

Col. By all means in the world.

Mrs Circ. But there is, likewiſe, another party, for whom a place ought to be kept.

Mrs Sim. Another! Who can that be I wonder?

Sir Luke. A ſmall appendix of mine.

Mrs Sim. How, Madam!

Mrs Circ. You need not be jealous, Sir Luke—taſte that tart, Mrs Simper—it is only my huſband the Serjeant.—Ha! ha! ha!—Betty makes them herſelf.

Mrs Sim. Oh! you abominable creature! How could ſuch a thought come into your head?

Sir Luke. Ma'am—[*offering ſweetmeats to* Mrs Simper.]

Mrs Sim. Not a bit more, I thank you.—I ſwear and vow I ſhould ſwoon at the ſight.

Mrs Circ. And I ſhould receive him with the polite indifference of an abſolute ſtranger.

Sir Luke. Well ſaid, my good Lady Intrepid! But, notwithſtanding, I would venture a trifle that his appearance would give you ſuch an electrical ſhock—

Mrs Circ. You are vaſtly deceived.

Sir Luke. Dare you come to the proof? Will you give me leave to introduce Mr Serjeant? He is not far off.

Mrs Circ. What, my huſband?

Sir Luke. Even he! I ſaw him as I enter'd the hall.

Mrs Circ. Impoſſible!

Sir Luke. Nay, then I muſt fetch him.

[*Exit* Sir Luke.

Col. I can't conceive what the knight would be at.

Mrs Sim. Why, he is mad.

Mrs Circ. Or turn'd fool.

Enter Sir Luke, *with the* Serjeant's *peruke on a block.*

Sir Luke. Now, Madam, have I reaſon? Is this your huſband or not?

Mrs Sim. It is he; not the leaſt doubt can be made.

Col. Yes, yes, it is the Serjeant himſelf.

Mrs Circ. I own it; I acknowledge the lord of my wiſhes. [*Kiſſes the block.*]

Mrs Sim. All his features are there!

Col. The grave caſt of his countenance!

Sir Luke. The vacant ſtare of his eye!

Mrs Circ. The livid hue of his lips!

Mrs Sim. The rubies with which his cheeks are enrich'd!

Col. The ſilent ſolemnity when he ſits on the bench!

Mrs Circ. We muſt have him at table: but pray good folks let my huſband appear like himſelf.—I'll run for the gown. [*Exit.*

Mrs Sim. By all means in the world.

Sir Luke. Diſpatch, I beſeech you.

Mrs Circuit *returns with a gown and band.*

Mrs Circ. Sir Luke, lend your aſſiſtance.

Col. There, place him at the head of the table.

[*They fix the head at the back of a chair, and place it at table; then all ſit.*]

Mrs Sim.

Mrs Sim. Madam, you'll take care of your huſband.

Mrs Circ. I don't want to be put in mind of my duty.

Mrs Sim. Oh, Madam! I know that very well.

Sir Luke. Come, Hob or Nob, Maſter Circuit—let us try if we can't fuddle the Serjeant.

Col. O, fie! I have a proper reſpect for the coif.

Mrs Sim. Don't be too facetious, Sir Luke: it is not quite ſo ſafe to ſport with the heads of the law; you don't know how ſoon you may have a little buſineſs together.

Sir Luke. But come, the Serjeant is ſulky.—I have thought of a way to divert him:—You know he is never ſo happy as when he is hearing a cauſe; ſuppoſe we were to plead one before him; Mrs Circuit and I to be counſel, the Colonel the clerk, and Mrs Simper the cryer.

Mrs Circ. The fineſt thought in the world! And ſtay, to conduct the trial with proper ſolemnity, let's rummage his wardrobe; we ſhall there be able to equip ourſelves with ſuitable dreſſes.

Sir Luke. Alons, alons.

Mrs Sim. There is no time to be loſt. [*all riſe.*]

Mrs Circ. [*Stopping ſhort as they are going out.*] But won't my huſband be angry, if we leave him alone? Bye, dearee—we ſhall ſoon return to thee again. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Serjeant Circuit, *not perceiving the collation.*

Serj. So, my lord not being able to ſit, there was no occaſion for me.—I can't put that girl's nonſenſe out of my head—My wife is young to be ſure, and loves pleaſure I own; but as to the main article, I have not the leaſt ground to ſuſpect her in that—No, no!—And then Sir Luke! my *profien ami*, the deareſt friend I have in the—Heyday! [*ſeeing the collation*] what the deuce have we here?—A collation!—So, ſo—I ſee Madam knows how to divert herſelf during my abſence.—What's this? [*ſeeing the block.*] Oh, ho! ha! ha! ha!—Well, that's pretty enough I proteſt—Poor girl, I ſee ſhe could not be happy without having ſomething at table that reſembl'd me.—How pleaſed ſhe will be to find me here in *propria perſona*.—By your leave, Mrs Circuit—[*ſits down and eats*] Delicate eating, in troth—and the wine [*drinks*]—Champaign as I live—muſt have t'other glaſs—They little think how that gentleman there regales himſelf in their abſence—Ha! ha! ha!—quite convenient, I vow—the heat of the weather has made me—

me—Come, brother Coif, here's your health—[*drinks*]—I muſt pledge myſelf I believe—[*drinks again*]—develiſh ſtrong—pſhut!—Somebody's coming—[*gets up and goes towards the wings*]—What do I ſee? four lawyers! What the devil can be the meaning of this? I ſhould be glad to get at the bottom of—Hey! by your leave, brother Serjeant—I muſt crave the uſe of your robe—[*ſits down, and gets under the gown*]—Between ourſelves, this is not the firſt time this gown has covered a fraud.

Enter Sir Luke, Colonel, Mrs Circuit, *and* Mrs Simper, *dreſſed as counſellors.*

Sir Luke. Come, come, gentlemen, diſpatch, the court has been waiting ſome time. Brother Circuit, you have look'd over your brief?

Mrs Circ. What, do you ſuppoſe, Sir, that like ſome of our brethren I defer that till I come into court? No, no.

Sir Luke. This cauſe contains the whole marrow and pith of all modern practice.

Mrs Circ. One ſhould think, Sir Luke, you had been bred to the bar.

Sir Luke. Child, I was ſome years in the Temple; but the death of my brother robb'd the robe of my labours.

Mrs Sim. What a loſs to the public!

Sir Luke. You are ſmart, Mrs Simper. I can tell you, Serjeant Snuffle, whoſe manner I ſtudied, pronounced me a promiſing youth.

Mrs Sim. I don't doubt it.

Sir Luke. But let us to buſineſs. And firſt, for the ſtate of the caſe: The parties you know are Hobſon and Nobſon; the object of litigation is a ſmall parcel of land, which is to decide the fate of a borough.

Mrs Circ. True; call'd Turnbury Mead.

Sir Luke. Very well. Then to bring matters to a ſhort iſſue, it was agreed, that Nobſon ſhould on the premiſes cut down a tree, and Hobſon bring his action of damage.

Mrs Circ. True, true.

Sir Luke. The jury being ſworn, and the counſellors ſeated, the court may proceed.—Take your ſeats—But hold—I hope no gentleman has been touch'd on both ſides.

All. Oh, fie!

Sir Luke. Let ſilence be call'd.

Mrs Sim. Silence in the court!

Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. But ſtop. To be regular, and provide for freſh cauſes, we muſt take no notice of the borough and lands, the real objects in view, but ſtick faſt to the tree, which is of no importance at all.

All. True, true.

Sir Luke. Brother Circuit, you may proceed.

Mrs Circ. Gentlemen of the Jury.—I am in this cauſe counſel for Hobſon, the plaintiff.—The action is brought againſt Nebuchadonezer Nobſon, that he the ſaid Nobſon did cut down a tree, value two-pence, and to his own uſe ſaid tree did convert.—Nobſon juſtifies, and claims tree as his tree. We will, gentlemen, firſt ſtate the probable evidence, and then come to the poſitive; and firſt as to the probable. When was this tree here belonging to Hobſon, and claim'd by Nobſon, cut down? Was it cut down publicly in the day, in the face of the ſun, men, women, and children, all the world looking on? No; it was cut down privately, in the night, in a dark night, nobody did ſee, nobody could ſee—Hum—And then with reſpect and regard to this tree, I am inſtructed to ſay, gentlemen, it was a beautiful, an ornamental tree to the ſpot where it grew. Now can it be thought that any man would come for to go in the middle of the night, nobody ſeeing, nobody did ſee, nobody could ſee, and cut down a tree, which tree was an ornamental tree, if tree had been his tree?—Certainly no.—And again, gentlemen, we moreover inſiſt, that this tree was not only ornamental to the ſpot where it grew, but it was a uſeful tree to the owner: it was a plum-tree, and not only a plum-tree, but I am authoriſed to ſay the beſt of plum-trees, it was a damaſcen plum.—Now can it be thought, that any man would come for to go, in the middle of the night, nobody ſeeing, nobody did ſee, nobody could ſee, and cut down a tree; which tree was not only an ornamental tree, but a uſeful tree; and not only a uſeful tree, but a plum-tree; and not only a plum-tree, but the beſt of plum-trees, a damaſcen plum? Moſt aſſuredly no.—If ſo be then, that this be ſo, and ſo it moſt certainly is, I apprehend no doubt will remain with the court, but my client a verdict will have, with full coſts of ſuits, in ſuch a manner and ſo forth, as may nevertheleſs appear notwithſtanding.

Sir Luke. Have you done, Mr Serjeant?

Mrs Circ. You may proceed.

Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. Gentlemen of the Jury—I am in this cauſe counſel for Hob—Zounds! I think the head moves.

All. Hey!

Col. No, no, Mrs Simper jogg'd the chair with her foot, that was all.

Sir Luke. For Hercules Hobſon—(I could have ſworn it had ſtirr'd)—I ſhan't, gentlemen, upon this occaſion, attempt to move your paſſions, by flowing periods and rhetorical flowers, as Mr Serjeant has done; no, gentlemen, if I get at your hearts, I will make my way through your heads, however thick they may be—in order to which, I will purſue the learned gentleman, through what he calls his probable proofs: and firſt, as to this tree's being cut down in the night; in part we will grant him that point, but, under favour, not a dark night, Mr Serjeant; no, quite the reverſe, we can prove that the moon ſhone bright, with uncommon luſtre that night—So that if ſo be as how people did not ſee, that was none—[Serjeant *ſneezes.*] nay, Mrs Circuit, if you break the thread of my—

Mrs Circ. Me break!—I ſaid nothing I'm ſure.

Sir Luke. That's true, but you ſneezed.

Mrs Circ. Not I.

Sir Luke. I am ſure ſomebody did; it could not be the head—conſider the leaſt interruption puts one out of one's—None of our faults, they might have look'd on and ſeen if they would. And then as to this beautiful tree, with which Mr Serjeant has ornamented his ſpot—No, gentlemen, no ſuch matter at all; I am inſtructed to ſay quite the reverſe; a ſtunted tree, a blighted, blaſted tree; a tree not only limbleſs and leafleſs, but very near lifeleſs; that was the true ſtate of the tree: and then as to its uſe, we own it was a plum-tree indeed, but not of the kind Mr Serjeant ſets forth, a damaſcen plum; our proofs ſay loudly a bull plum; but if ſo be and it had been a damaſcen plum, will any man go for to ſay, that a damaſcen plum is the beſt kind of plum; not a whit, I take upon me to ſay it is not a noun ſubſtantive plum—with plenty of ſugar it does pretty well indeed in a tart, but to eat it by itſelf, will Mr Serjeant go to compare it with the queen mother, the padrigons—

Serj. [*Appearing ſuddenly from under the gown.*] The green gages, or the orleans.

Mrs Circ.

Mrs Circ. As I live 'tis my huſband! [*All run off except Sir Luke, and the Serjeant.*]

Serj. Nay, Sir Luke, don't you run away too—give me a buſs—ſince I was born I never heard a finer reply; I am ſorry I did not hear your argument out—but I could not reſiſt.

Sir Luke. This I own was a little ſurpriſe—had you been long here, Mr Serjeant?

Serj. But the inſtant you enter'd.

Sir Luke. So, then all is ſafe. [*Aſide.*

Serj. But come, won't you refreſh you, Sir Luke—you have had hard duty to-day.

Sir Luke. I drank very freely at table.

Serj. Nay, for the matter of that, I ha'nt been idle; [*both drink.*] But come, throw off your gown, and let us finiſh the bottle: I ha'nt had ſuch a mind to be merry I can't tell the day when.

Sir Luke. Nay then, Mr Serjeant, have at you—come, here's long life and health to the law. [*Drinks.*

Serj. I'll pledge that toaſt in a bumper. [*Drinks*].—I'll take Charlotte's hint, and ſee if I can't draw the truth out of the Knight by a bottle. [*Aſide.*

Sir Luke. I'll try if I can't fuddle the fool, and get rid of him that way. [*Aſide.*

Serj. I could not have thought it: why where the deuce did you pick up all this? But by the bye, pray who was the cryer?

Sir Luke. Did you not know her? Mrs Simper, your neighbour.

Serj. A peſtilent jade! ſhe's a good one I warrant.

Sir Luke. She is thought very pretty; what ſay you to a glaſs in her favour?

Serj. By all means in the world! [*they drink.*] and that ſpark the clerk?

Sir Luke. Colonel Secret, a friend to the lady you toaſted.

Serj. A friend! oh, ay,—I underſtand you—come, let us join 'em together.

Sir Luke. Alons. [*drink.*] Egad, I ſhall be caught in my own trap, I begin to feel myſelf fluſter'd already. [*Aſide.*

Serj. Delicate white wine, indeed! I like it better every glaſs. [*Sings.*]

Drink

Drink and drive care away,
Drink and be merry.

Sir Luke. True, my dear Serjeant—this is the ſearcher of ſecrets—the only key to the heart.

Serj. Right, boy, *in vino veritas.*

Sir Luke. No deceit in a bumper. [*Sings.*] Drink and be merry.

Serj. Merry! damme, what a ſweet fellow you are, what would I give to be half ſo jolly and gay.

Sir Luke. [*Appearing very drunk.*] Would you? And yet do you know, Serjeant, that at this very juncture of time, there is a thing has popp'd into my head, that diſtreſſes me very much.

Serj. Then drive it out with a bumper. [*drinks.*] Well, how is it now?

Sir Luke. Now! the matter is not mended at all.

Serj. What the deuce is the buſineſs that ſo ſticks in your ſtomach.

Sir Luke. You know, my dear Serjeant, I am your friend, your real, your affectionate friend.

Serj. I believe it, Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. And yet, for theſe ſix months, I have conceal'd a ſecret, that touches you near, very near.

Serj. Me near! That was wrong, very wrong; friends ſhould have all things in common.

Sir Luke. That's what I ſaid to myſelf; Sir Luke, ſays I, open your heart to your friend; but to tell you the truth, what ſealed up my lips, was the fear that this ſecret ſhould make you ſulky and ſad.

Serj. Me ſulky and ſad! ha! ha! how little you know of me.

Sir Luke. Swear then that you wont be uneaſy.

Serj. Well, I do.

Sir Luke. [*Riſing.*] Soft; let us ſee that all's ſafe;—well, Mr Serjeant, do you know that you are—a fine, honeſt fellow?

Serj. Is that a ſecret?

Sir Luke. Be quiet; a damn'd honeſt fellow—but as to your wife—

Serj. Well?

Sir Luke. She is an infamous ſtrum—

Serj. How! it is a falſehood, Sir Luke, my wife is as virtuous a wom—

Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. Oh! if you are angry, your ſervant—I thought that the news would have pleaſed you—for after all, what is the buſineſs to me? What do I get by the bargain?

Serj. That's true; but then would it not vex any man to hear his wife abuſed in ſuch a—

Sir Luke. Not if its true, you old fool.

Serj. I ſay it is falſe; prove it; give me that ſatisfaction, Sir Luke.

Sir Luke. Oh! you ſhall have that pleaſure directly; and to come at once to the point—you remember laſt new year's day how ſeverely it froze.

Serj. I do recollect.

Sir Luke. Very well; we are all invited to dine at Alderman Inkle's.

Serj. Very right.

Sir Luke. Well, and I did not go: Mrs Circuit made me dine here in this houſe—was it my fault?

Serj. No, no, Sir Luke, no.

Sir Luke. At table ſays ſhe—ſhe ſaid, I was the picture of you—was it my fault?

Serj. Well, and ſuppoſe you are; where's the miſchief in that?

Sir Luke. Be quiet I tell you;—then throwing her arms round my neck,—it is my huſband himſelf I embrace, it is my little old man that I kiſs!—for ſhe has a prodigious affection for you at bottom—was it my fault?

Serj. But what is there ſerious in this, doſt think I mind ſuch trifles?

Sir Luke. Hold your tongue, you fool, for a moment—then throwing her Tereſa aſide—upon my ſoul ſhe is prodigious fine every where here—was it my fault?

Serj. My fault! my fault! I ſee no fault in all this.

Sir Luke. [*pretending to cry.*] No! why then my dear friend, do you know that I was ſo unworthy, ſo profligate, ſo abandon'd—as to—[*riſes*] ſay no more, the buſineſs is done.

Serj. Ay, indeed!

Sir Luke. Oh! fact! there is not the leaſt doubt of the matter; that is no hear ſay, dy'e ſee, I was by all the while.

Serj. Very pretty! very fine, upon my word.

Sir Luke. Was it my fault? What could I do? Put

yourſelf in my place; I muſt have been more, or leſs than man to reſiſt.

Sir Luke. Your fault, Sir Luke, No, no—you did but your duty—but as to my wife—

Sir Luke. She's a diabolical fiend, I ſhall hate her as long as I live.

Serj. And I too.

Sir Luke. Only think of her forcing me, as it were with a ſword at my breaſt, to play ſuch a trick; you, my dear Serjeant, the beſt, trueſt friend I have in the world. [*Weeps.*

Serj. [*Weeping.*] Dry your tears, dear Sir Luke; I ſhall ever gratefully acknowledge your confidence in truſting me with the ſecret—[*taking him forward.*] But I think it might be as well kept from the reſt of the world.

Sir Luke. My dear ſoul, do you think I would tell it to any mortal but you? No, no, not to my brother himſelf—You are the only man upon earth I would truſt.

Serj. Ten thouſand thanks, my dear friend! ſure there is no comfort, no balſam in life like a friend—but I ſhall make Madam Circuit remember—

Sir Luke. We neither of us ought to forgive her—were I you, I'd get a divorce.

Serj. So I will—provided you will promiſe not to marry her after.

Sir Luke. Me! I'll ſooner be torn to pieces by wild horſes—no, my dear friend, we will retire to my houſe in the country together, and there, in innocence and ſimplicity, feeding our pigs and pigeons, like Pyramus and Thiſbe, we will live paragons of the age.

Serj. Agreed; we will be the whole earth to each other; for, as Shakeſpeare ſays,

> "The friend thou haſt and his adoption tried
> "Clap to thy ſoul, and quit the world beſide."—

Sir Luke. Zounds, here comes Madam Serjeant herſelf.

Enter Mrs Circuit.

Mrs Circ. So, gentlemen! a ſweet tete-a-tete you have been holding—but I know it all, not a ſyllable you have ſaid has been loſt.

Sir Luke. Then, I hope you have been well entertained, Mrs Circuit.

Mrs Circ. And you, you mean-ſpirited, daſtardly wretch,

to

to lend a patient ear to his infamous, improbable tales, equally ſhameful both to you and me.

Serj. How, Madam! have you the aſſurance—

Mrs Circ. Yes, Sir, the aſſurance that innocence gives; there is not a ſoul, I thank heaven, that can lay the leaſt ſoil, the leaſt ſpot, on my virtue; nor is there a man on earth but yourſelf would have ſat and ſilently liſten'd to the fictions and fables of this intemperate ſot.

Serj. Why to be ſure the knight is overtaken a little; very near drunk.

Sir Luke. I hope he believes it is a lie. [*Aſide.*

Mrs Circ. Do me inſtant juſtice on this defamer, this liar, or never more expect to ſee me in your houſe.

Serj. I begin to find out the fraud, this is all a flam of the knight's.

Mrs Circ. I'll drive this inſtant to a friend of mine in the Commons, and ſee if no ſatisfaction can be had, for blaſting the reputation of a woman like me—and hark you, Sir, what inducement, what devil could prompt—

Serj. Ay; what devil could prompt—

Sir Luke. Heyday!

Mrs Circ. But I gueſs at your motive; you flatter'd yourſelf, that by marrying Charlotte, and diſcarding of me, you ſhould engroſs all his affections, and—

Serj. True, true—ſtop, my life, let me come at him a little; hark you, Mr Knight, I begin to diſcover that you are a very ſad dog.

Sir Luke. Et tu Brute!

Serj. Brute!—you'll find I am not the brute you would have me believe—I have conſider'd both ſides of the queſtion.

Sir Luke. Both ſides of the queſtion?

Serj. Both: if your ſtory is true, you are a ſcoundrel to debauch the wife of your friend; and if it is falſe, you are an infamous liar.

Sir Luke. Well argued.

Serj. So in both caſes, get out of my houſe.

Sir Luke. Nay, but Serjeant—

Serj. Troop I tell you, and never again enter theſe walls—you have libelled my wife, and I will ſee you no more.

Sir Luke. Was there ever ſuch a—

Serj. March! and as to my daughter, I would as ſoon marry her to a forma pauperis client.

[Serjeant *puſhes* Sir Luke *off.*

Mrs Circ.

Mrs Circ. Do you conſider, Mr Circuit, where you are puſhing the fellow?—That chamber is Charlotte's.

Enter Sir Luke, Woodford, Charlotte, *and* Jack.

Sir Luke. Heyday! who the deuce have we here?—Pray walk in, my good folks—your ſervant, Miſs Charlotte; your ſervant, Mr What-dy'e-call-um.—Mr Serjeant, you need not trouble yourſelf to cater for Miſs; your family, you ſee, can provide for themſelves.

Serj. Heyday! What the deuce is all this! Who are you, Sir, and how came you here? [*To* Woodford.

Jack. It was I, father, that brought him.

Serj. How, ſirrah!

Sir Luke. Well ſaid, my young limb of the law.

Jack. Come, let us have none o'your—though I brought Mr Woodford, you could not perſuade me to do the ſame office for you—father, never ſtir if he did not make me the proffer, if I would let him into the houſe the night you was at Kingſton, of a new pair of ſilk ſtockings, and to learn me a minuet.

Sir Luke. Me! I ſhould never have got you to turn out your toes.

Jack. Ay, and moreover you made me puſh out my cheſt, and do ſo with my fingers, as if I was taking two pinches of ſnuff.

Sir Luke. You ſee, Mr Serjeant, what a fondneſs I have for every twig of your family.

Serj. I ſhall thank you hereafter—but from you, Charlotte, I expected other gueſs—

Char. When, Sir, you hear this whole matter explain'd, you will acquit I am ſure.

Woodf. Indeed, Sir, I am wholly to blame; my being here was as much a ſurprize upon Miſs Charlotte as—

Serj. But now you are here, pray what's your buſineſs?

Jack. O! father, I can acquaint you with that—he wanted me to bring a love-letter to Charlotte, ſo I told him he might bring it himſelf, for that I would not do any ſuch thing for never ſo much, for fear of offending of you.

Serj. You mended the matter indeed—but, after all, who, and what are you?

Jack. Its the young gentleman that lives over our heads, to whom Mr Fairplay is guardian.

Serj. Who, Woodford?

Jack.

Jack. The ſame.

Serj. And are you, young man, in a ſituation to think of a wife?

Woodf. I am flattered, Sir, that as juſtice is with me, I ſhall one day have no contemptible fortune to throw at her feet.

Serj. Juſtice is!—What ſignifies juſtice?—Is the law with you, you fool?

Woodf. With your help, Sir, I ſhould hope for their union, upon this occaſion at leaſt.

Serj. Well, Sir, I ſhall re-conſider your papers, and, if there are probable grounds, I may be induced to hear your propoſals.

Woodf. Nay, then, Sir, the recovering my paternal poſſeſſions makes me anxious indeed—Could I hope that the young lady's good wiſh would attend me!

Char. I have a father, and can have no will of my own.

Sir Luke. So then it ſeems poor Pill Garlick here is diſcarded at once.

Serj. Why, could you have the impudence, after what has happen'd, to hope that—

Mrs Circ. He has given wonderful proofs of his modeſty.

Sir Luke. Be quiet, Mrs Circuit—Come, good folks, I will ſet all matters to rights in a minute; and firſt, Mr Serjeant, it becomes me to tell you, that I never intended to marry your daughter.

Serj. How! never!

Sir Luke. Never. She is a fine girl I allow; but would it now, Mr Serjeant, have been honeſt in me, to have robb'd the whole ſex of my perſon, and confin'd my favours to her.

Serj. How!

Sir Luke. No! I was ſtruck with the immorality of the thing; and therefore to make it impoſſible that you ſhould ever give me your daughter, I invented the ſtory I told you of Mrs Circuit and me.

Serj. How!

Sir Luke. Truth, upon my honour.—Your wife there will tell you the whole was a lie.

Serj. Nay, then indeed—But with what face can I look up to my dear? I have injured her beyond the hopes of forgiveneſs.

forgiveneſs.—Would you, lovee, but paſs an act of oblivion—

Sir Luke. [*kneels.*] See me here proſtrate to implore your clemency in behalf of my friend.

Mrs Circ. Of that I can't determine directly—But as you ſeem to have ſome ſenſe of your guilt, I ſhall grant you a reprieve for the preſent; which contrition and amendment may, perhaps, in time ſwell into a pardon.

But if again offending you are caught,

Serj. Then let me ſuffer, dearee, as I ought.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

THE

BANKRUPT;

A COMEDY,

IN

THREE ACTS.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr Foote.

FOR wit's keen ſatire, and this laughing ſtage,
What theme ſo fruitful as a Bankrupt Age?
For not confin'd to commerce is the curſe,
The head is near as empty as the purſe;
Equally ſunk, our credit and our wit,
Nor is the ſage more ſolvent than the cit:
All theſe——but ſoft, ere thus abroad we roam,
Were it not prudent firſt to look at home?
You, gentle Sirs, have giv'n me credit long,
And took my word for many an idle ſong;
But if exhauſted, I give notes to-day,—
For wit and humour, which I cannot pay,
I muſt turn Bankrupt too, and hop away.
Unleſs, indeed, I modiſhly apply,
For leave to ſell my works by lottery.
Tho' few will favour, where's no caſh to ſee 'em;
Poor hopes, that way to part with my Muſeum:
My old friend, Smirk, indeed, may lend his aid,
And ſell by auction all my ſtock in trade;
His placid features, and imploring eye,
May tempt perhaps the tardy town to buy;
His winning manner, and his ſoft addreſs,
To other ſales of mine have giv'n ſucceſs.
But after all, my ever honour'd friends,
On you alone my fate this night depends;
I've fought ſome battles, gain'd ſome vict'ries here,
And little thought, a culprit to appear
Before this houſe; but if reſolv'd you go
To find me guilty, or to make me ſo,
To grant me neither wit, nor taſte, nor ſenſe,
Vain were my plea, and uſeleſs my defence.
But ſtill, I will not ſteal, I will not beg,
Tho' I've a paſſport in this wooden leg.
But to my cot contentedly retire,
And ſtew my cabbage by my only fire;
Mean time, great Sirs, my ſentence yet unknown,
E'en as your Juſtice be your candour ſhewn,
And when you touch my honour, don't forget your own.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Robert Riſcounter, —	Mr FOOTE.
Sir James Biddulph, —	Mr AICKIN.
Pillage, — — —	Mr PALMER.
Reſource, — —	Mr FEARON.
Margin, — —	Mr BADDELEY.
Robin, — —	Mr WHITEFIELD.
Phelim O'Flam, —	Mr BANNISTER.
James, — —	Mr R. PALMER.
Sir Thomas Tradewell, —	Mr DAVIS.
Dingey, — —	Mr GRIFFITHS.
Pepper, — —	Mr STEPHENS.
Plaſter, — —	Mr JONES.
Rumour, — —	Mr LLOYD.
Clerk, — — —	Mr WALTERS.
Lady Riſcounter, —	Miſs SHERRY.
Lydia, — —	Mrs JEWELL.
Lucy, — — —	Miſs AMBROSE.
Kitty, — — —	Miſs PLATT.

ACT I.

Enter Robin *and* Kitty, *meeting.*

Rob. THIS letter and caſket, with my maſter's moſt reſpectful compliments, you will, Kitty, with your own fair hands, deliver to Miſs.

Kit. The caſket is heavy—I ſuppoſe, Mr Robin, this is what my lady calls the Purryfunalia?

Rob. A ſmall tribute, Madam, to adorn the bride on the happy occaſion.

Kit. What then, I ſuppoſe you look upon this marriage as good as concluded.

Rob. Things are gone ſuch a length, that not the leaſt doubt can be made.

Kit. And yet between the cup and the lip,—you remember the proverb?

Rob. One of the parties may die to be ſure, otherwiſe I don't know how—

Kit. No?

Rob. No: The young lady has not alter'd her mind?

Kit. Not to my knowledge.

Rob. What, Sir Robert Riſcounter, her father? theſe curmudgeonly cits regard no ties, no obligations, when they have an higher intereſt in view. I ſuppoſe he has received larger propoſals from ſome other party.

Kit. I have heard no ſuch thing.

Rob. Well then, I am ſure no impediment can ariſe from our quarter. My maſter, Sir James Biddulph, is too much a man of honour: beſides, I know his whole ſoul is wrapt up in Miſs Lydia.

Kit. He has given her pretty convincing proofs of his paſſion.

Rob. What, I ſuppoſe the malicious mother-in-law, who, I know, hates Miſs, and has a damn'd deal of art, in conjunction with Miſs Lucy, that precious pledge of her former huſband's affections, has contrived to throw ſome confounded rub in the way.

Kit. Bleſs me, Mr Robin, I don't know what you mean, I am ſure I ſaid nothing at all.

Rob. No?

Kit. No. But only that things which are not done, may

may perhaps never be done; there is nothing certain but death.

Rob. Very moral, Miſs Kitty,—(there is ſome myſtery, if I could but get at it, but this ſlut is as cunning—I will have a trial, however) nay, for the matter of that, I can have, Mrs Kitty, no intereſt at all in this match: there is ſo much confinement, and form, even in the moſt faſhionable families, that a ſingle ſervice is beſt ſuited to me, eſpecially too, that now I am got into moſt of the clubs: there is one circumſtance I ſhall moſt feelingly regret: that, I own, will greatly touch me.

Kit. And pray, what may that be, Mr Robin?

Rob. Not living under the ſame roof with Miſs Kitty. I made no doubt, Madam, but your fortunes would follow your miſtreſs's, and, in that caſe, I thought to ſoften the rigours of my captivity in your agreeable converſe.

Kit. Really, Mr Robin? Well, I proteſt, I did not—

Rob. And when our mutual endeavours had procured for us a ſmall independence, I flatter'd myſelf with gently ſliding the down-hill of life, ſubject to no other will but Miſs Kitty's.

Kit. What a difference between him, and the ſervants of this ſide the Bar?—Really, Mr Robin, you talk nearly as well as your maſter.

Rob. And no wonder, Madam, ſince love, the ſame deity, inſpires us both.

Kit. How quick you are in your rippartees, Mr Robin? are you good at a riddle?

Rob. If you mean the making them, no; it is too low a ſpecies of writing for me; for novels I have now and then ſome dealings with Noble, and have by me a genteel comedy of one act, that is thought to have a good deal of merit.

Kit. And pray when does it make its appearance?

Rob. Why, faith, I don't know, all the managers are ſuch ſcribblers, that they won't give a genius fair play, but engroſs the whole ſtage to themſelves.

Kit. Very ſelfiſh, indeed. Well, Mr Robin, though you won't make a riddle, I will, which, as my lady expects me, you may ſtudy to expound by yourſelf. This match won't take place, and yet are none of the parties to blame; I may live in the ſame houſe with you, though I ſhould leave my young

young miſtreſs's ſervice, and the loſs of my place may perhaps be the making of my fortune. So adieu.

Rob. Nay, but Miſs Kitty, one word, if you pleaſe.

Kit. Not a ſyllable, go, and puzzle your brains. But take this, for your comfort, that if you cannot at preſent make out my meaning, a little time will fully explain it. [*Exit.*

Rob. So ſkittiſh and ſhy, Mrs Pert! but if our next meeting don't bring forth this ſecret, you are no true chambermaid, nor I fit for a valet de chambre. All reſerve amongſt ſervants is flat treaſon againſt the community. Every well-diſciplin'd domeſtic is bound in honour, however careful of his own, to reveal all family ſecrets to the reſt of the tribe. But I muſt bruſh off, for here comes my lady. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady Riſcounter, *and* James.

Lady Riſ. And he has promiſed that the paragraph ſhall appear in the paper this morning?

James. I am afraid, Madam, there is no doubt of his keeping his word.

Lady Riſ. Afraid! what a puſillanimous creature art thou?

James. As your ladyſhip, by what means I know not, is acquainted with my veneration for Miſs, you can't wonder at my feeling ſome compunction, in becoming an inſtrument to ruin her fame.

Lady Riſ. Why the fellow is a fool: don't you conſider, that her ruin, as you call it, will be your riſe?

James. Perhaps ſo, Madam, but how can I—

Lady Riſ. You love Lydia, you ſay?

James. More than I have words to expreſs.

Lady Riſ. And Sir James Biddulph you deteſt, as a ſucceſsful rival, no doubt?

James. Except on that account, I have no reaſon.

Lady Riſ. And what better reaſon can any man have? don't you know, that the two great maſter paſſions that give birth to all that we do, is hatred and love?

James. Without doubt.

Lady Riſ. The mind would ſtagnate without them; and are not you particularly fortunate, in being able, by one maſterly ſtroke, to gratify both?

James. Were I indeed ſure of ſucceeding with Miſs.

Lady Riſ.

Lady Rif. You have every probable chance in your favour: in the firſt place, it is impoſſible, conſiſtently with his honour, that Sir James Biddulph can purſue his deſigns upon Lydia.

James. May be not.

Lady Rif. Nor will any proper ſuitable perſon think of her when her reputation is gone.

James. Too true, I believe.

Lady Rif. Then, who ſo likely to ſucceed as yourſelf? as you are the party ſuſpected, common policy will point out you for her huſband.

James. But will Miſs Lydia be brought to ſubmit?

Lady Rif. She can have no choice but her father's. Him I can eaſily manage, and poſſibly, as a douceur, prevail on him to augment the very conſiderable fortune ſhe derives from her aunt: never fear, things are in a very good way.

James. I muſt ſubmit all to your ladyſhip's management.

Lady Rif. Your part will be eaſy enough, you will have nothing to do but be paſſive.

Enter Kitty, *and* Lucy, *with a newſpaper in her hand.*

Lucy. Here, Madam, here it is, and placed in a moſt conſpicuous part of the paper.

Lady Rif. And no alteration?

Lucy. Not a word. In the exact form that we ſent it.

Lady Rif. Pr'ythee read it, my dear.

Lucy. [*Reads.*] "We can aſſure the public, from the "very beſt authority, that the beautiful daughter, by a "former venture, of an eminent banker, not far from the "Monument, was ſurpriſed by the ſervants, in a moſt cri-"tical ſituation, with Mr J——s, clerk to her father."

Lady Rif. Right, right.

Lucy. "And what heightens her crime, ſhe was on the "eve of being married to an amiable young baronet, at "the weſt end of the town, the apparent object of her own "choice."

Lady Rif. Finely circumſtantial, it is impoſſible for any body to err in the perſon.

Lucy. Not in nature; now, I think, we ſhall pull down Miſs Prudery's pride.

Lady Rif. It cannot fail. Kitty, you have carefully peruſed the inſtructions I gave you?

Kit. Pleaſe your ladyſhip, I have them by heart.

Lady Rif.

Lady Rif. Don't be too forward in replying to any queſtion they put to you; but anſwer with a kind of reluctant heſitation, as if the facts were forc'd from your mouth.

Kit. Never fear, Madam.

Lady Rif. Don't forget to make frequent profeſſions of the great love and affection you bear your young miſtreſs, that you could not have thought it, ſhan't know whom to truſt for the future; ready to lay down your life for your lady.

Lucy. Suggeſt too, that ſome ſtrange arts muſt have been uſed, or you are convinc'd ſhe could never have been brought to ſubmit.

Kit. I ſhall carefully, Madam, obey your directions.

Lady Rif. And ſqueeze out a tear now and then, if you can.

Lucy. Or, if they won't come, rub your eyes till they are red.

Lady Rif. Right; this will give probability to all that you ſay.

Lucy. Otherwiſe, the young hypocrite's behaviour has been always ſo ſpecious, thoſe who know her won't credit the ſtory.

Kit. Suppoſe, Madam, Sir James Biddulph, or any body elſe, ſhould make any enquiry.

Lady Rif. Anſwer none of their queſtions; your tenderneſs for Lydia will be a proper excuſe; to your maſter's authority, indeed, you are obliged to ſubmit. You comprehend me?

Kit. Perfectly, Madam.

Lady Rif. Within, I will give you further inſtructions; and remember, Kitty, your fortune is at ſtake: ſucceſs, in this one inſtance, will make you eaſy for life.

Kit. The beſt I can do will be but a poor return for your ladyſhip's goodneſs.

Lady Rif. Send the newſpaper in to your maſter. [*Exit* Kitty.] You have, James, ſeen none of our people this morning?

James. I have not enter'd the ſhop.

Lady Rif. Then get out of the way as faſt as you can; ſecrete yourſelf ſomewhere, that will give additional ſtrength to the ſtory. Your withdrawing will argue a conſciouſneſs ariſing from guilt.

James. That I moſt ſufficiently feel.

Lady Rif.

Lady Rif. Succeſs will ſoon drown the remembrance. [*Exit* James.] That fellow muſt not appear; his mind is ſo mankiſh, that ſhould he be confronted with Lydia, he would betray our whole plot in an inſtant.

Lucy. It is a wonder, Madam, how you have got all this addreſs: inſtead of a private family, you are form'd to govern a country.

Lady Rif. Why, I think, I may without vanity ſay, that I deriv'd from nature ſome talents for this kind of intrigue; but to the care of my education I chiefly owe what I am.

Lucy. Indeed, Madam!

Lady Rif. My father was a ſtock-broker, you know, and your father, my firſt huſband, an attorney, my dear.

Lucy. True, Madam.

Lady Rif. And as they had no reſerve, they kept no ſecrets from me, I muſt have been a blockhead, indeed, not to have made ſome progreſs in their profeſſional arts.

Lucy. True, Madam.

Lady Rif. But after defeating Sir James Biddulph's deſigns upon Lydia, to turn the tide of his affections, and ſubſtitute you in her room, will, Lucy, be the great political effort.

Lucy. From your ladyſhip's great abilities there cannot be the leaſt doubt of ſucceſs: beſides, her father is ſo haſty and violent, that I am ſure he will never be brought to forgive her.

Lady Rif. There is no relying on that; no mortal was ever ſo mutable. Our various climate is not ſo inconſtant as he. Sir Robert is choleric enough, but then, as he is provoked without cauſe, he is appeaſed without reaſon; one word will enflame, another extinguiſh the fire; whom one minute he perſecutes, the next he protects. His joy, grief, love, hatred, are in eternal rotation, and I have been often tempted to think his mind a machine, moved only by the immediate objects before it.

Lucy. And yet, Madam, how completely you rule him?

Lady Rif. No longer, child, than I ſtay by his ſide; after that, the firſt perſon has him that ſees him, and all my impreſſions are effac'd in an inſtant.

Enter Kitty.

Kit. My maſter has got at the paragraph.

Lady Rif.

Lady Riſ. Has he ſo? well, and—

Kit. He enquired, Madam, for you, and putting his finger here, bid me ſhew this directly to your ladyſhip.

Lady Riſ. He did not ſuſpect then that I had ſeen it before?

Kit. Not in the leaſt—but here he comes, tottering and trembling—with his face as white as a ſheet.

Lady Riſ. Get you behind.

Enter Sir Robert Riſcounter.

Sir Rob. Well, my dear, have you read—

Lady Riſ. Sir Robert, I have.

Sir Rob. Have you ſo? Well, and pray what do you think? Did you ever ſee ſuch an audacious, abominable, impudent, ſcandalous piece of ſcurrility? Zounds, give me my cane, I will go directly to the raſcally printer's, and—

Lady Riſ. But ſuppoſe, Sir Robert, the printer ſhould not be paſſive, and, in return for the ſtrokes of your cane, ſhould leave the marks of his nails in your face.

Sir Rob. There may be ſomething in that, as your ladyſhip ſays, I have heard ſome of the rogues are ſtrong and ſturdy enough.

Lady Riſ. And, firſt, let us be ſure who the party is the paragraph points at.

Sir Rob. Hey! what d'ye ſay? points at? why, it is as clear as the ſun—[*takes the paper*]—banker—Monument—firſt venture—zounds, they might as well have publiſhed my name, and my daughter's, at length.

Lady Riſ. Why, to ſay truth, the marks are pretty ſtrong; but ſtill let us coolly conſider the caſe. Kitty, go down; Lucy, my dear, leave Sir Robert and me together a little. [*Exit Lucy and Kitty.*

Sir Rob. Ay, go, child, pr'ythee go. I don't believe, Lady Riſcounter, that there is a ſingle man in the ward, who would have the leaſt heſitation in pronouncing who was—

Lady Riſ. Well, but don't let us be in ſuch hurry to make the application ourſelves; the malice of others will be ready enough to do that: let me ſee, is there no other banker lives near the Monument?

Sir Rob. Not that I know; but ſuppoſe there ſhould,

here the weſt end of the town, and the amiable baronet, puts the matter out of diſpute: hey, what d'ye ſay?—

Lady Riſ. That, indeed; but, hold a little, does not it mention the name of the paramour? Ay, here it is, J—s.

Sir Rob. J—s.

Lady Riſ. J—s, I don't recollect any body that viſits here, whoſe name thoſe letters will ſuit.

Sir Rob. There is no Jones, nor Joddrell—poo, pox, that is an L—nor Jennings, nor Jarvis, nor Jenkins, nor—

Lady Riſ. Not that I recollect.

Sir Rob. There is Jacobs the Jew, but he is as old as one of the patriarchs, with his beard down to his breeches; they can never mean him.

Lady Riſ. Poo! that is too abſurd to ſuppoſe: but ſtay, are there no other diſtinguiſhing marks? um, um—"J—s, clerk of her father's," I own that paſſage eſcaped me.

Sir Rob. Hey! what did you ſay? and me too, one of my clerks! who can that be? J—s, the two letters belonging to a ſurname.

Lady Riſ. So I ſhould imagine.

Sir Rob. Zounds! it can never be James.

Lady Riſ. James!

Sir Rob. An impudent, eternal, damn'd ſon of a bitch! this is the conſequence of taking beggars into your boſom.

Lady Riſ. But, Sir Robert—

Sir Rob. Don't mention it, Madam; was not he the thirteenth ſon of a ſtarv'd curate in Eſſex, ragged as their colts, and knew about as much as one of their calves—did not I feed, cloathe, take him into my houſe, treat him as if he had been—and, in return, the villain to diſhonour my child!

Lady Riſ. You are too impatient, Sir Robert; why ſhould you fix all at once upon James? I have obſerved the lad's behaviour to be diſcreet and modeſt; nay, indeed, rather ſhy and reſerv'd.

Sir Rob. That is true enough, I muſt own. I never remark'd the boy to be preſumptuous and forward, like ſome of our pert prigs of the city, but, as your Ladyſhip obſerves, rather baſhful and ſhy. No, no, it can never be him.

Lady Riſ. Not but I have known people with that ſpecious outſide appearance, carry minds as malignant and daring—

Sir Rob. The curſedeſt ſly dogs upon earth: hypocriſy

is

is the fineſt veil for a villain. I always ſuſpected there was ſomething bad behind his ſolemn ſanctified look: I don't believe the ſcoundrel ever ſwore an oath ſince he came into the houſe. There is a villain for you, my dear.

Lady Riſ. Nay, but my dear, let us conclude nothing raſhly. Suppoſe you ſend for James up, and ſift him a little?

Sir Rob. That mayn't be amiſs—who's there?

Lady Riſ. Not that I believe he will be ever brought to confeſs.

Sir Rob. He! no, no, curſe him. Him! you will never catch him at that: you might as well hope to extract ſugar from ſalt. I may as well let him alone.

Lady Riſ. Let us ſee him however.

Enter a Servant.

Sir Rob. True. Let James know that I want him, but don't tell the fellow that I am angry, and ſo get him to ſkulk out of the way.

Serv. I did not know that your Worſhip was angry, 'till you told me your—

Sir Rob. I tell you! my dear, did I ſay any ſuch thing? you prying, impertinent—Go, and do as you are bid.

[*Exit Servant.*

Lady Riſ. I don't think it unlikely, Sir Robert, but ſome idle acquaintance, without conſidering the conſequences, may have inſerted this malicious article, by way of pleaſantry, as a kind of jeſt upon James.

Sir Rob. Nothing ſo probable, Lady Riſcounter: this town ſwarms with ſuch forward, frivolous puppies.

Enter Servant.

Well, where is James?

Serv. Sir, he is not within.

Sir Rob. What, is the raſcal run off?

Lady Riſ. No, my dear, perhaps only gone out with ſome bills for acceptance.

Sir Rob. Like enough. When will he be back.

Serv. The reſt of the clerks have not ſeen him to-day.

Sir Rob. Not ſeen him to-day? what, are all of them blind then?

Lady Riſ. Nay, Sir Robert, perhaps he has not been in the ſhop.

Serv.

Serv. So they ſay. [*Exit.*

Sir Rob. Then they could not ſee him, indeed. Not in the ſhop! nay, then the buſineſs is clear; guilt, guilt, flight is full as bad as confeſſion.

Lady Rif. It does look ſuſpicious, I own; but then nothing ill can happen without your daughter's concurrence, and you have not the leaſt doubt of her.

Sir Rob. Doubt! hey!

Lady Rif. And, in fact, have nothing to fear.

Sir Rob. Fear! doubt! I hope your Ladyſhip has no more doubts than myſelf.

Lady Rif. Why ſhould I? how does this affair concern me?

Sir Rob. As it concerns me, Lady Riſcounter; do you ſuppoſe I ſhould have been indifferent, if ſuch a charge had fallen on Lucy?

Lady Rif. Such a charge can never fall upon my daughter Lucy.

Sir Rob. Full as ſoon as on my daughter Lydia.

Lady Rif. I am not, Sir Robert, ſo certain of that.

Sir Rob. Lady Riſcounter, you begin to alarm me; you know more of this matter than you are willing to own.

Lady Rif. Whatever I know, Sir Robert, I am reſolved not to communicate.

Sir Rob. And why not?

Lady Rif. Whatever a mother-in-law ſays, the good-natured world always imputes to malice.

Sir Rob. Generally the caſe, I muſt own. But to me you may, nay, you ought to reveal.

Lady Rif. Since you are ſo earneſt, I own ſome rumours have reach'd me.

Sir Rob. Of what kind?

Lady Rif. You will pardon me there: if you will examine your daughter's maid, Kitty; ſhe, I am told, can ſatisfy all your enquiries.

Sir Rob. An artful baggage, I know. For Heaven's ſake, my dear, ſend her hither directly.

Lady Rif. But not the leaſt mention of me. [*Exit.*

Sir Rob. Very well, I never obſerv'd the leaſt correſpondence between Lydia and James; but what of that? they would take good care, I warrant, to conceal it from me.

Enter

Enter Kitty.

So, I find you are the go-between, the little infamous agent in this curs'd—

Kit. Sir Robert—

Sir Rob. You muſt have been a volunteer; I am ſure, James was not able to bribe you, for he is as poor as a pillag'd black in Bengal.

Kit. Really, Sir, I don't underſtand you.

Sir Rob. You mean, huſſey, you won't: Come, you may as well tell me all the particulars concerning Lydia and James; with the main article, you ſee, I am already acquainted.

Kit. Don't preſs me, pray Sir; I would rather die than ſay any thing to hurt my young miſtreſs. [*Cries.*

Sir Rob. Nay, pr'ythee, Kitty, don't cry, you are a good girl, and love my daughter, I ſee.

Kit. And not without reaſon, for ſhe has been the kindeſt, beſt—

Sir Rob. Nay, till now, ſhe was ever an amiable girl; but here, child, you will do her a capital ſervice.

Kit. Indeed, Sir.

Sir Rob. For if her affections are fix'd upon James, tho' I may lament, I ſhall not oppoſe him.

Kit. Since that is the caſe, I can't ſay, but early one morning, hearing a noiſe in Miſs Lydia's apartment, I ſtepp'd down to ſee what was the matter.

Sir Rob. Well?

Kit. Juſt as I got to the foot of the ſtairs, her door open'd, and out came Mr James.

Sir Rob. Did he? and why did not you alarm the houſe and ſeize the villain directly?

Kit. That, Sir, would have ruined my Lady's reputation at once.

Sir Rob. True enough, you did wiſely. Did the fellow perceive you?

Kit. Yes, Sir, and made me a ſign to be ſilent.

Sir Rob. I don't doubt it.

Kit. Indeed, he came to me two hours after, told me he had a paſſion for Miſs, never could get an opportunity of diſcloſing his mind, and deſperate at finding his hopes on the point of being ruin'd, he had ſtolen that morning into

into her chamber, humbly to implore her compaſſion and pity.

Sir Rob. He choſe a fine time and place for the purpoſe.

Kit. On his knees he deſired I would not diſcloſe to any mortal what I had ſeen.

Sir Rob. Which you ſhould not have done.

Kit. He was too late in his caution; not five minutes before I had told it to Mrs Hemſhot, Miſs Lucy's maid.

Sir Rob. No wonder then the ſtory is public.

Kit. I am certain ſure, my young miſtreſs is innocent, for Mr James vowed and declar'd he was all upon honour.

Sir Rob. The malice of mankind will never be brought to believe it; you may go. [*Exit* Kitty.] So the girl's reputation is gone, and a retreat from the world the only choice that is left her: all my calamities are come upon me at once; my child ruin'd, and from the general diſtreſs, my own fame and fortune on the brink of deſtruction: the attorney and broker will be inſtantly here to contrive means for propping my tottering credit. Am I in a condition to think of expedients, or to liſten to—

Enter Servant.

Serv. A card, Sir. [*Exit.*

Sir Rob. [*Reads.*] "Sir James Biddulph's compliments "to Sir Robert Riſcounter, and if convenient will take "the liberty to wait on him this morning." Prepar'd as I expected, our misfortunes have reach'd him, and he comes to break off the match; he is not to be blam'd.—This raſh, inconſiderate—I'll to her, and if ſhe has the leaſt atom of feeling, I'll—And yet, how could the poor girl help his intruſion? ſhe might be ignorant, and yet the fellow, without encouragement, would never have dared to —Yet the impudence of ſome men is amazing, and ſo indeed is the folly of women: the original fault muſt be his, But her after-compliance makes her equally guilty, for had ſhe diſapprov'd, ſhe would have reveal'd the fact to her mother or me. That, that, condemns her at once; I will to her directly, and find out the full extent of her guilt. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Miſs Lucy *and* Miſs Lydia *diſcovered.*

Lucy. TO us, indeed, who are encumber'd with fathers and mothers, marriage is a convenient buſineſs enough.

Lyd. And why on that account, my dear Lucy?

Lucy. As it makes one the entire miſtreſs of one's time, and one is accountable to no mortal for what one ſays or does.

Lyd. What, Lucy, not to your huſband?

Lucy. Nay, don't be prudiſh, my dear: you are going back to the days of Queen Beſs; who talks now of obedience and duty? ridiculous! her Majeſty's old fardingale is not more out of faſhion.

Lyd. No!

Lucy. No: one reads in books, indeed, of nuptial ties and conjugal love; mere obſolete ſtuff! modern marriages are mere matters of intereſt.

Lyd. Intereſt!

Lucy. Ay, child; for inſtance now, Sir Thomas Perkins, our neighbour, finding that Miſs Williams has a good parcel of land, which being contiguous to his eſtate, will be very proper for him to poſſeſs; immediately ſends his rent-roll a-courting to her's. The parchments are produc'd on both ſides, and no impediments, that is incumbrance appearing, a couple of lawyers marry the manors together.

Lyd. Without the leaſt regard to the perſons.

Lucy. Poo, perſons! they are conſider'd, child, as manſion-houſes upon the eſtates, which one lives in, or neglects, juſt as they happen to be convenient, or not.

Lyd. But ſuppoſe, Lucy, as in mine, there ſhould happen to be no land in the caſe.

Lucy. Then, child, the bargain is alter'd: you depoſit ſo much money, and he grants you ſuch an annuity; a mere Smithfield bargain, that is all.

Lyd. A pretty picture you give me of marriage. But this is all raillery, Lucy; I am ſure you would never ſubmit to this barter and ſale.

Lucy. I ſhould do like the reſt of the world. We muſt take things as we find them. You are not ſo fooliſh as to be fond of Sir James Biddulph, my dear.

Lyd.

Lyd. Fond? the expreſſion is ſtrong; you muſt imagine I prefer him to the reſt of—

Lucy. Why, as to his appearance, it muſt be own'd, that the manſion is a pretty modern ſtructure enough, well built, and prettily finiſh'd: I can't indeed ſay his upper ſtory is furniſhed quite to my taſte.

Lyd. Nay, Lucy, now you are unjuſt, the whole world concur in giving him ſenſe.

Lucy. Nay, that article is not very material. If I had him, that is a part of his houſe with which I ſhould hold very little communication, my dear. But however, you love him.

Lyd. Or I am ſure I never would have him.

Lucy. And, I ſuppoſe, if any accident was to break off this match, it would make you very unhappy.

Lyd. Can you doubt it, my dear?

Lucy. There is one evil that attends theſe ridiculous contracts.

Lyd. You don't look upon love then as an eſſential ingredient?

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! ſilly and ſingular; do you know, Lydia, why love is always painted as blind?

Lyd. There are many cauſes aſſigned by the poets.

Lucy. But not one has given the true one: becauſe the little rogue ſhuts our eyes to our intereſts.

Lyd. Fye, Lucy, where could you get theſe narrow and libertine notions?

Lucy. A little more experience will tell you. But here comes Sir Robert, not a word of what has paſs'd.

Lyd. I ſhall, my dear Lucy, for your ſake, endeavour to forget all you have ſaid.

Enter Sir Robert Riſcounter.

Sir Rob. Lucy, you may go down. [*Exit* Lucy.] After what has paſs'd, you will not be ſurpriz'd that I inſiſt upon your immediately quitting my houſe!

Lyd. Quitting the houſe, Sir!

Sir Rob. Your fortune is independent and large; you will no doubt be happy in eſcaping from the obſerving eye of a father.—I will be cool, and deſire only an anſwer to a very few queſtions. Since the death of your mother (who is happy in having eſcap'd the knowledge of this infamous buſineſs),

buſineſs) have I ever been wanting in any act of paternal affection?

Lyd. For Heaven's ſake, Sir, what can be the meaning of—

Sir Rob. Come, no evaſions, but anſwer briefly, yes, or no, to my queſtions.

Lyd. No, Sir.

Sir Rob. After my firſt care to educate you fit for the world, has it not been my principal ſtudy to ſettle you properly in it?

Lyd. Moſt aſſuredly, Sir.

Sir Rob. And knowing to what temptations girls at your age are expos'd, did I not ſeek out a man of rank, honour, and fortune, to be your protector, and guardian for life?

Lyd. I confeſs it.

Sir Rob. Did you ever expreſs the leaſt diſlike to Sir James Biddulph's addreſs?

Lyd. Never.

Sir Rob. How could you then ſo far forget what you owe to me, and yourſelf, as privately to harbour and encourage a paſſion—

Lyd. I am confounded.

Sir Rob. For an object too unſuitable in every reſpect: for a mere creature of charity?

Lyd. Charity!

Sir Rob. Ay, for it was compaſſion to the father's numerous family that induced me to take James into my houſe.

Lyd. James! what of him? or what relation, Sir, can he have to me?

Sir Rob. This is aſtoniſhing in a girl of her years. What, then, you know nothing of this fellow's affections?

Lyd. For me?

Sir. Rob. Ay, for you. No billet-doux, no private meetings, no ſtealing into your chamber before the ſervants were out of their beds.

Lyd. Amazing! and who, Sir, has dared to inſinuate—

Sir Rob. Inſinuate! why the tale is the talk of the town; all the morning papers are full on't.

Lyd. What can, Sir, be the meaning of this? is it poſſible you can think, Sir, your daughter ſo abandoned, ſo loſt—

Sir Rob. Hey!

Lyd. Recollect, dear Sir, I beſeech you, have I, in the whole courſe of my life, ever once dared to deceive you?

Sir Rob. Why, child, I can't ſay that you have. But in this caſe, there is ſuch poſitive proof.

Lyd. Of what kind, I beſeech you?

Sir Rob. Facts, facts, well atteſted; ſo don't pretend to deny.

Lyd. Atteſted! by whom?

Sir Rob. Their names are needleſs at preſent. But what motive or intereſt could any one have to invent, or propagate—

Lyd. None, that I can diſcover; but, however ſtrong the appearance, if either in thought, word, or deed, there has any thing either criminal or culpable paſſed between me and—

Sir Rob. What, no declarations? no interviews?

Lyd. No more than with any other man in your ſervice.

Sir Rob. Aſtoniſhing!

Lyd. If the contrary can be made to appear, abandon me, Sir, at once to that world, already ſo prepoſſeſs'd to my prejudice, the greateſt misfortune that can ever befall me.

Sir Rob. Well, child, riſe; I can't help giving credit to what you aver. But how to perſuade the reſt of—

Enter a Servant.

Somebody wants me? as I expected. Sir James Biddulph I reckon.

Serv. No, Sir, a couple of gentlemen who ſay they came by appointment.

Sir Rob. I gueſs who they are. Another bad buſineſs. Shew them into the parlour. [*Exit Servant*]. You don't know half your father's afflictions—go, child, go into your chamber.

Lyd. I hope my father believes me.

Sir Rob. I do, I do. As ſoon as I have diſpatch'd theſe gentlemen, I will ſee you again. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a Parlour.*

Enter Pillage *and* Reſource.

Pill. Ay, take my word for it, Mr Reſource, in the whole round of the law, and, thank Heaven, the dominions

nions are pretty extenſive, there is not a nicer road to hit than the region of Bankrupts.

Reſ. I ſhould have thought it a turnpike, for you ſee how eaſily even a country attorney can find it.

Pill. Pſhaw, what, amongſt manufacturers, and meagre mechanics? fellows not worth powder and ſhot; and yet theſe paltry provincials, Mr Reſource, are often obliged to ſolicit my aid.

Reſ. Indeed!

Pill. Why, t'other day, a poor dog, over head and ears in debt, from the country, was recommended to me, by a client; the fellow had ſcrap'd together all he could get, and came up to town, with a view of running beyond ſea, but I ſtopp'd him directly.

Reſ. Really.

Pill. O, ay, in a couple of months waſh'd him as white as a ſheep that is juſt ſhorn.

Reſ. How did you bring it about?

Pill. Eaſy enough. Made him take a houſe in Cheapſide, call'd him a citizen in the London Gazette, and his name of John Madge (being as common as carrots) not a ſoul in the country ſuſpected thatit was he.

Reſ. How ſhould they?

Pill. Paſs'd a few neceſſary notes to get him number and value, white-waſh'd him, and ſent him home to his wife.

Reſ. Cleanly and cleverly done.

Pill. When the country chaps brought in their bills, he drew out of his pocket a certificate, and gave them a receipt in full for all their demands.

Reſ. How the loobies muſt look.

Pill. Chop-fallen, no doubt: but he is in buſineſs again.

Reſ. He is?

Pill. O yes, and I hear does very well. For I left him two hundred out of the ſix he brought with him, to begin the world with credit afreſh.

Reſ. Very generous indeed, Mr Pillage.

Pill. O! a trifling affair, got little by it!—for the matter of that, a mere ſtatute is not much in itſelf.

Reſ. Ay! Well I thought it brought pretty perquiſites with it.

Pill. No, No; it is a good hot-bed indeed to raiſe Chancery ſuits in.

Reſ.

Ref. Ay, that is a produce that deſerves propagation.

Pill. What, I ſee you have found a remedy for Mr Monk of the Minories? I thought his was an incurable caſe.

Ref. Only ſkinn'd o'er the ſore, Mr Pillage, it will ſoon break out again.

Pill. What were the means that you uſed?

Ref. Got ſome friends of mine to advance him caſh on a project.

Pill. Of what kind?

Ref. A ſcheme of his, to monopolize ſprats and potatoes.

Pill. And it took?

Ref. Oh! there was no danger of that. The people of this country are always ready to bite at a bubble.

Pill. Will it hold?

Ref. Pſhaw! We ſhall break before the ſeaſon for ſprats; and as to the potatoes, we had laid in a ſhip load or two.

Pill. For which you procured a good price?

Ref. Not a ſouſe. They are all now in our cellars in Southwark, and have ſhot out branches as tall as the trees in the Park.

Pill. Ha! ha! ha! but a-propos, can you gueſs Sir Robert's buſineſs with us?

Ref. Very near, I believe.

Pill. What, the houſe is not a tumbling?

Ref. A pretty large crack.

Pill. Which he wants our aſſiſtance to plaſter. Why, I thought the knight was as firm as a rock.

Ref. I knew better things. I ſaw the manſion was daily decaying. Huſh, here he comes.

Enter Sir Robert, *followed by a Clerk.*

Sir Rob. As we have effects in our hands, accept the bills to be ſure. But how to diſcharge them when they are due—So, gentlemen, I have ſent for you to beg your aſſiſtance.

Pill. Sir Robert, we ſhall be very happy to ſerve you, if you will tell us but how.

Sir Rob. Why, to deal plainly, gentlemen, my affairs are come to a criſis, and without ſome ſubſtantial and ſpeedy aſſiſtance, my credit will quickly expire.

Pill. You ſurprize me: I never gueſs'd it in danger.

ger. Pray, Sir Robert, what brought on the diſeaſe, was it an Alley fever, or a gradual decay?

Sir Rob. A complication of cauſes. Not but I could have weather'd them all, had the houſe in Holland but ſtood, their failure muſt be followed by mine.

Pill. What, Van Swieten's?

Sir Rob. Have you heard any thing of him to-day.

Pill. No doubt, I believe, of their ſtopping; their bills were offered at Garraway's under forty per cent.—As your name is not blown upon yet, ſuppoſe you coin a couple of quires! do'nt you think the circulation might ſerve you.

Sir Rob. No, that mint is exhauſted, and private paper return'd to its primitive value. My real caſe can be no longer conceal'd. I muſt ſtop, and ſhould be glad of your advice how to manage the matter.

Pill. There are two methods in uſe. The choice will depend on how your affairs ſtand with the world.

Sir Rob. Bitter bad, Mr Pillage.

Pill. I gueſs'd as much, by your ſending for us. They treat us, Mr Reſource, like a couple of quacks, never apply but in deſperate caſes.

Reſ. But in all diſeaſes there are different degrees.

Pill. True; for inſtance, if you find you are pretty near on a par, with perhaps a ſmall balance per contra, ſummon your creditors, lay your conditions fully before them, convince them you have a fund to anſwer all their demands, and crave a reſpite for three or four years.

Sir Rob. Juſt to call in my debts, and make the moſt of my other effects?

Reſ. True; as the Engliſh merchants have a good deal of milk in their blood, that is a favour rarely refuſed.

Sir Rob. This, Mr Pillage, will be only deferring the evil.

Pill. That is, Sir Robert, as you manage the cards.—Don't you ſee that the length of time, with the want or wiſh of ready money for trade, will diſpoſe the bulk of your creditors to ſell their debts at a loſs of thirty or forty per cent.?

Sir Rob. True.

Reſ. No contemptible ſum, when a man's dealings are large.

Sir Rob. But how ſhall I profit by—

Pill.

Pill. What hinders you from privately buying the debts?

Sir Rob. That, indeed—

Ref. A fine fortune ſav'd out of the fire.

Pill. True. And now we talk of the fire, for a preſent ſupply, you may burn a warehouſe or two, after it has been gutted of all its contents.

Ref. And recover the full amount of the policy.

Pill. Did you never try that?

Ref. No, I don't think he has done any thing in the fire way yet; have you, Sir Robert?

Sir Rob. Never once came into my head.

Pill. May be not; oh! for a fertile brain, there are many means to be uſed; but what d'ye ſay to my plan?

Sir Rob. What, the ſummoning ſcheme? I am ſo involved, that I am afraid that project will never prevail.

Pill. Then you have nothing left but a ſtatute.

Sir Rob. But if my certificate ſhould not be granted?

Pill. That is my proper buſineſs, Sir Robert. If we find your creditors inclined to be cruſty, there will be no difficulty in creating demands to get number and value.

Sir Rob. That will ſwell my debts to a monſtrous amount.

Ref. So much the more for your honour; conſider you are a knight, and your dignity demands you ſhould fail for a capital ſum.

Sir Rob. Does it?

Pill. To be ſure. Why, you would not ſneak into the Gazette like a Birmingham button-maker.

Ref. Oh fie!

Pill. He would never after be able to ſhew his head upon Change.

Ref. Never, never.

Pill. And then, you know, what with the portable ſtuff, ſuch as jewels, or caſh, that he himſelf may ſecrete, and the dividends that fall to the ſhare of his friends, which they will doubtleſs reſtore—

Ref. He will be fit to begin the world again with *eclat.*

Pill. In a much better condition than ever.

Ref. And his children's children will have reaſon to thank him.

Sir Rob. But is there not ſome danger in concealing the portable ſtuff, as you call it?

Pill.

Pill. Not in the leaſt. Beſides, to colour the buſineſs, you may collect a purſe of light guineas, with an old batter'd family watch, and deliver them to the commiſſioners, on your firſt examination.

Ref. That will give an air of integrity.

Sir Rob. You ſeem to think, then, gentlemen, that it is the duty of every honeſt merchant to break once at leaſt in his life, for the good of his family?

Ref. Not the leaſt queſtion of that.

Pill. Every day's practice confirms it. Well, Sir Robert, when ſhall I provide you the tackle!

Sir Rob. The tackle!

Pill. In about a month or ſix weeks, I think, you may be fit to appear in the papers.

Sir Rob. In the Gazette, as a bankrupt?

Ref. Aye, but then no time muſt be loſt.

Pill. Not a moment, for ſhould they ſmoke his deſign—

Sir Rob. Gentlemen, I muſt decline your aſſiſtance.

Pill. How?

Sir Rob. For, without conſidering the private injury I may do to particular perſons, this miſchievous method muſt ſoon affect the whole mercantile world.

Pill. Why, what has that—

Sir Rob. Mutual confidence is the very cement of commerce. That weaken'd, the whole ſtructure muſt fall to the ground.

Ref. Hey!

Sir Rob. From the practice of theſe infamous arts, as it is impoſſible they can be conceal'd, what ſuſpicions, what jealouſies muſt every man in the trade entertain?

Pill. How?

Sir Rob. What an injury, beſides, to thoſe in my unhapy condition? the riſques and loſſes unavoidably connected with commerce, procure the unſucceſsful trader, generally the compaſſion, ſometimes the friendly aid, of thoſe of his order.

Ref. We know that well enough.

Sir Rob. But when bankruptcy becomes a lucrative traffic, and men are found to fail with a view of making their fortunes, the unhappy and fraudulent will be confounded together, and puniſhment fall on his head who has a title to pity.

Pill. The man's mad.

Sir Rob.

Sir Rob. Perhaps I myſelf am a ſacrifice to thoſe very arts you have recommended ſo warmly. But there the miſchief ſhall end. Men may ſuffer from my calamities, but they never ſhall by my crimes. [*Exit.*

Pill. Did you ever meet with ſuch a ſqueamiſh old fool? what could he mean by ſending for us?

Ref. Who can tell? his head's turn'd, I ſuppoſe.

Pill. I thought we had him ſure; but how nimbly he has ſlipp'd through our fingers!

Ref. Neceſſity will ſoon bring him back to our hook.—He is ſhy for the preſent, but I warrant he will bite by and by.

Pill. Or we ſhall loſe a capital prize.

Ref. Indeed, ſhould his friends interpoſe, and matters be compounded without us—

Pill. That I have a ſure way to prevent. Before an hour is paſt, I will tear ſuch a rent in his robe, as I defy all the botchers in Europe to mend.

Ref. By what means?

Pill. I know he is in the receipt of ſome government money; I will take care to ſaddle him with an extent.

Ref. That will do.

Pill. I ſhall only juſt go and take out a commiſſion againſt five macaronies, who are joint annuitants to a couple of Jews.

Ref. But how can you lug them into a ſtatute? they are no dealers, you know.

Pill. No dealers? yes, but they are.

Ref. Aye, of what kind?

Pill. Why, why they are dealers of cards. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lady Riſcounter, *and* Sir James Biddulph.

Lady Riſ. If you will walk in, Sir James, Sir Robert is a little buſy at preſent, but he will wait upon you directly.

Sir Ja. I have no call, Madam, that prevents my attending his leiſure.

Lady Riſ. I fear the deſign of this viſit, Sir James, is of a different nature from thoſe we have lately receiv'd.

Sir Ja. I came, Madam, to offer my aid in detecting and puniſhing an infamous calumny that has made its way to the public this morning.

Lady Riſ. But reports of this kind, when deſpiſed and neglected,

neglected, gradually die of themſelves. It is a moſt unlucky affair, I confeſs.

Sir. Ja. Unlucky! moſt falſe and atrocious; I hope, Madam, we ſhall be able to diſcover its author.

Lady Rif. As to that, it is ſcarce worth the enquiry.

Sir Ja. How, Madam?

Lady Rif. We have family reaſons, Sir James, for wiſhing to draw a veil over—

Sir Ja. A veil! I am aſtoniſh'd, Lady Riſcounter!

Lady Rif. The loſs of your alliance, indeed, which now we dare neither expect, nor deſire, has mortified us all not a little. If any other means could be found to form a connection between us, and a perſon of your merit and rank, there is nothing, I am ſure, I ſhould ſo ardently wiſh.

Sir Ja. Your Ladyſhip is moſt exceedingly kind.

Lady Rif. I hope the whole family, eſpecially myſelf and daughter, are not, through the error of one, to be puniſhed with the loſs of your friendſhip.

Sir Ja. You do me infinite honour.

Lady Rif. Indeed, my Lucy, upon this occaſion, felt chiefly for you; for tho' perhaps not ſo impoſing and ſpecious, as the girl whoſe lapſe we lament, ſhe has great goodneſs of heart, and a proper ſenſe of your worth.

Sir Ja. Miſs Lucy is moſt prodigiouſly—

Lady Rif. But Sir Robert's door opens, and as my preſence may not be ſo proper upon this occaſion, I take my leave, with the hopes of ſoon receiving a viſit.

Sir Ja. I ſhall be happy, Madam, in ſeizing every occaſion—your Ladyſhip's—[*Exit* Lady Riſcounter]. What can be the meaning of this? She ſeems to confirm and credit the infamous ſtory. Sir Robert, I ſuppoſe, will explain it.

Enter Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. Sir James, I ſcarce know how to accoſt you; but the confuſion I feel at the unhappy cauſe of your viſit.

Sir Ja. Indeed, Sir Robert, I own myſelf greatly perplex'd. I enter'd your houſe, full of the warmeſt reſentment, and prepar'd to take every active part in my power; but your lady has dropp'd ſome hints, as if you wiſh'd to ſtifle all further enquiry. Pray, Sir Robert, be candid and open. This, Sir, I think, I have right to demand.

Sir Rob. Doubtleſs. Nor do I wiſh to conceal: there is room for ſuſpicion, I own; ſo far Lady Riſcounter is right; but yet, Lydia—

Sir Ja. You have then ſeen her, Sir Robert—

Sir Rob. Not ten minutes ago. Her ſurpriſe ſeem'd ſo ſincere, and ſo artleſs, and—

Sir Ja. Without doubt—

Sir Rob. And ſuch ſtrong marks of truth, both in her words, and her looks, that I confeſs—perhaps it was a fatherly weakneſs, I could not help giving credit to all that ſhe ſaid.

Sir Ja. You did her but juſtice, I am ſure. I will pawn my life upon her honour and faith.

Sir Rob. But yet how to reconcile—for, Sir James, I will be impartial; ſome accounts I have had—

Sir Ja. Time can only do that. Deep-laid deſigns are not diſcovered at once. If we can but get at the clue—And what ſteps have you taken? have you been or ſent to the printer's?

Sir Rob. No. I did think of going, but my lady perſuaded me, that the ſtep would be wrong.

Sir Ja. For which ſhe had very good reaſons, no doubt. Will you give me leave to accompany you thither?

Sir Rob. If you think it right.

Sir Ja. The very firſt thing you ſhould do.

Sir Rob. But ſhould not we conſult my lady about it?

Sir Ja. The very laſt thing you ſhould do.

Sir Rob. And why ſo?

Sir Ja. I muſt beg to conceal my reaſons at preſent.—I too, have my ſuſpicions, Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. You have.

Sir Ja. Which I fancy you will ſoon find to be better founded than thoſe of your family.

Sir Rob. Not unlikely, Sir James.

Sir Ja. Come, Sir, my chariot is ready.

Sir Rob. I attend you, Sir James. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT III.

Enter Robin, *and a Servant of* Sir Robert.

Rob. MY ſervice to Miſs Kitty, and I ſhould be happy to have the honour of her ear a moment.

Serv. Of her ear!

Rob. Theſe low fellows know nothing of the phraſes in faſhion, mere Vandals and Goats: but I muſt accommodate myſelf to their country. Will you tell Miſs Kitty Combruſh, that I ſhould be glad to ſpeak with her, when ſhe is at leiſure?

Serv. Now I underſtand what you mean, that will I, Mr Robin. [*Exit.*

Rob. Damn'd provoking, however, to have our ſhip ſunk juſt as we were entering the port; this could not happen but by the contrivance of ſome of the crew: our captain too is moſt horribly hurt. This jade, I am convinc'd, is in the whole of the plot; but her own art, and the ſkill of her prompter, will make it difficult to get at the bottom.

Enter Kitty.

Kit. Bleſs me, Mr Robin, after what has paſs'd, I little expected to ſee you again at our houſe.

Rob. What injuſtice both to me and yourſelf!

Kit. How ſo, Mr Robin?

Rob. To your powerful attractions, and my proper diſcernment.

Kit. I did not know I had any ſuch things, Mr Robin.

Rob. Infinite! but, above all, your penetration is the moſt ſurpriſing to me. The conjurer in the Old Bailey is a fool compar'd to Miſs Kitty. You are abſolutely as knowing as one of the Civils, if the latter part of your prediction was but as fully accompliſh'd.

Kit. What was that?

Rob. Our cohabitation in the ſame houſe, notwithſtanding——

Kit. Time may bring that about, Mr Robin.

Rob. I don't comprehend how that can happen.

Kit. No! why, to make your maſter amends for the loſs

loſs of Miſs Lydia, ſuppoſe we were to give him Miſs Lucy—

Rob. D'ye call that making my maſter amends?

Kit. She is a good ſhowy girl, and her fortune—

Rob. Will be no temptation to him, I know he deteſts her.

Kit. Indeed!

Rob. Cordially. So that if that be the only means, I have nothing left but deſpair. Oh! Miſs Kitty, think what miſery! that tender frame has a tear for pity, I'm ſure; to be deprived of the warmeſt wiſh of my life, to be cut off for ever—

Kit. And do you really think as you ſay?

Rob. Nothing but an amiable ignorance of your own charms, could for a moment induce you to doubt it.

Kit. Suppoſe then, Mr Robin, we were to live under our own roof, inſtead of that of another, don't you think it would be mending the matter?

Rob. It would be Elyſium, my angel. But how to get at the means?

Kit. If that is your objection, they may be eaſily found.

Rob Does my lovely Kitty think I can have any other?

Kit. Then ſince that is the caſe, Mr Robin, it is but right I ſhould explain to you what I meant by my riddle this morning. But ſee that we are ſafe.

Rob. Not a ſoul.

Kit. You muſt know, then, that this whole affair of Miſs Lydia is my lady's contrivance.

Rob. What, is that whole ſtory a fiction?

Kit. A mere ſham; nothing elſe; and to bring about Sir James's marriage with Lucy, her motive.

Rob. I conceive.

Kit. Now, as the project would not do without my aſſiſtance, my lady gave me (here it is, ſtuck in my ſtays) a note for five hundred pounds, if the match is broke off; and a thouſand, ſhould Miſs Lucy's take place.

Rob. Hum—hum—hum—500—hum—hum—Rebecca Riſcounter—it is juſt as you ſay.

Kit. Now, as matters ſtand, you ſee I am entitled to the firſt five hundred directly, and, with your aſſiſtance, perhaps the other may follow.

Rob. Not unlikely. But hold a little, dear Kitty, a little caution may not be amiſs. This miſtreſs of yours is

a damn'd artful woman; ſhe has trick'd others, and won't ſcruple cheating of you.

Kit. I don't underſtand you.

Rob. It is not quite clear that this note is a good one.

Kit. How!

Rob. I mean ſuch a one as ſhe will be obliged hereafter to pay.

Kit. Then the buſineſs ſhall be blown up in an inſtant.

Rob. Too late. She will only laugh at you when her ends are obtain'd.

Kit. Then what ſteps can we take?

Rob. There is an old maſter of mine, who lives in Brick-court in the Temple, as cunning a cur as ever hang'd an innocent man, or ſav'd a rogue from the gallows. I'll run, and aſk his opinion.

Kit. But won't that be betraying our ſecret?

Rob. Counſellors, like confeſſors, are bound not to reveal their client's confeſſion: beſides, I can eaſily conceal the name of the party.

Kit. You will come immediately back?

Rob. In an inſtant, unleſs I have your leave to go a ſtep further.

Kit. Further!

Rob. To Doctors Commons, for a little bit of parchment, that will ſoon unite us for ever.

Kit. O law! you are in a vaſt prodigious great hurry; but, I think, Mr Robin, you muſt do as you pleaſe.

Rob. Thus let me acknowledge your kind condeſcenſion. For a moment, then, my dear Kitty, adieu. [*Exit* Kitty.] So, now I have the means in my power to reſettle all our matters again. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *A Printer's.*

Margin *diſcovered with newſpapers, account-books, &c.*

Marg. September the 9th. Sold twelve hundred and thirty. June the 20th. Two thouſand and ſix. Good increaſe for the time, conſidering too that the winter has been pretty pacific: dabbled but little in treaſons, and not remarkably ſcurrilous, unleſs indeed in a few perſonal caſes. We muſt ſeaſon higher to keep up the demand. Writers in journals, like rope-dancers, to engage the public attention, muſt venture their necks every ſtep they take. The plea-

pleaſure people feel, ariſes from the riſks we run—what's the matter?

Enter Dingey.

Ding. Mr Hyſon has left the anſwer to his laſt letter on Eaſt India affairs.

Marg. A lazy raſcal, now his letter is forgot, he comes with an anſwer. Beſides, the ſubject is ſtale: Return it again. Are all our people in waiting?

Ding. The Attorney General to the paper, that anſwers the law caſes, is not come yet.

Marg. Oh! that's Ben Bond'em the bailiff; prudently done, perhaps he has a writ againſt one of our authors—Bid them enter, and call over their names.

Ding. Walk in, gentlemen.

Enter Pepper, Plaſter, Rumour, Forge'em, Fibber, Comma, Cauſtic, O'Flam, *and others.*

Ding. Politicians, pro and con, Meſſieurs Pepper and Plaſter.

Pep. Plaſt. Here.

Marg. Pepper and Plaſter, as both the Houſes are up, I ſhall adjourn your political warfare till their meeting again.

Pep. Don't you think the public would bear one ſkirmiſh more before we cloſe the campaign? I have a trimmer here in my hand.

Plaſt. To which I have as tart a retort.

Marg. No, no; enough for the preſent. It is, Plaſter, the proper timeing the ſubject, that gives ſucceſs to our labours. The conductor of a newſpaper, like a good cook, ſhould always ſerve up things in their ſeaſon: who eats oyſters in June? Plays and Parliament Houſes are winter proviſions.

Pep. Then half the ſatire and ſalt will be loſt: beſides, if the great man ſhould happen to die, or go out.

Marg. Pſhaw! it will do as well for the great man that comes in. Political papers ſhould bear vamping; like ſermons, change but the application and text, and they will ſuit all perſons and ſeaſons.

Plaſt. True enough; but mean time, what can we turn to; for we ſhall be quite out of work?

Marg. I warrant you, if you a'n't idle, there's buſineſs enough,

enough, the preſs teems with freſh publications—Hiſtories, tranſlations, voyages—

Pep. That take up as much time to read as to make.

Marg. And what with letters from Paris or Spaw, inundations, elopements, diſmal effects of thunder and lightning, remarkable cauſes at country aſſizes, and with changing the miniſtry now and then, you will have employment enough for the ſummer.

Plaſt. And ſo enter upon our old trade in the winter?

Marg. Aye, or for variety, as it muſt be tireſome to take always one ſide, you, Pepper, may go over to adminiſtration, and Plaſter will join oppoſition. The novelty may perhaps give freſh ſpirits to both.

Pep. With all my heart. A bold writer has now no encouragement to ſharpen his pen. I have known the day when there was no difficulty in getting a lodging in Newgate; but now, all I can ſay, won't procure me a warrant from a Weſtminſter Juſtice.

Marg. You ſay right, hard times, Mr Pepper, for perſecution is the very life and ſoul of our trade; but don't deſpair, who knows how ſoon matters may mend? gentlemen, you may draw back.—Read the next.

Ding. Critics—Thomas Comma, and Chriſtopher Cauſtic.

Marg. Where are they?

Ding. As you could not find them in conſtant employment, they are engaged by the great, to do the articles in the Monthly Reviews.

Marg. I thought they were done by Dr Doubtful, the Deiſt.

Ding. Formerly, but now he deals in manuſcript ſermons, and writes religious eſſays for one of the journals.

Marg. Then he will ſoon ſink. I foreſaw what would come of his dramming. Go on.

Ding. Collectors of paragraphs, Roger Rumour, and Phelim O'Flam.

Rum. Flam. Here.

Ding. Fibber and Forge'em, compoſers and makers of ditto.

Fib. Forg. Here.

Marg. Well, Rumour, what have you brought for the preſs?

Rum. I have been able to bring you no Poſitives.

Marg. How! no Poſitives?

Rum.

Rum. Not one. I have a Probability from the court end of the town; and two good Suppoſes out of the city.

Marg. Hand them here—[*reads.*] "It is probable, that "if the King of Pruſſia ſhould join the Czarina, France "will ſend a fleet into the Mediterranean, which, by gi- "ving umbrage to the maritime powers, will involve "Spain by its family compact. To which if Auſtria "ſhould refuſe to accede, there may be a powerful diver- "ſion in Poland, made conjunctly by Sweden and Den- "mark. And if Sardinia and Sicily abide by the treaties, "the German Princes can never be neuter; Italy will be- "come the ſeat of war, and all Europe ſoon ſet in a "flame."——Vaſtly well, Mr Rumour, finely confuſed, and very alarming. Dingey, give him a ſhilling for this. I hope no other paper has got it?

Rum. Oh fie! did you ever know me guilty of ſuch a—

Marg. True, true, now let us ſee your Suppoſes—[*Reads.*] "It is ſuppoſed, if Alderman Mango ſhould fur- "render his gown, he will be ſucceeded by Mr Deputy "Drylips, and if my Lord Mayor ſhould continue ill of "the gout, it is ſuppoſed the ſwan-hopping will ceaſe for "this ſeaſon."—That laſt ſuppoſe is fudged in, why, would you cram theſe upon me for a couple?

Rum. As diſtinct as can be.

Marg. Fye, remember our bargain. You agreed to do the court of Aldermen always for ſix pence.

Rum. What if a Common Hall ſhould be called?

Marg. Oh! then you are to have three pence a mo- tion, I know that very well: I am ſure no gentleman can accuſe me of being ſneaking. Dingey, give him ſix pence for his ſuppoſes. Well, Phelim O'Flam, any deaths in your diſtrict?

O'Flam. The devil a one.

Marg. How! none?

O'Flam. O yes, a parcel of nobodies, that died worth nothing at all. Fellows that can't pay for a funeral. Upon my conſcience, I can't think what becomes of the folks for my part; I believe, all the people who live in town, fall down dead in the country, and then too, ſince Dr Diſpatch is gone to the Bath, patients linger ſo long.

Marg. Indeed!

O'Flam. To be ſure they do. Why, I waited at the Jolly Topers, a matter of two days and a half, for the laſt breath

breath of Lady Dy Dropſy, for fear ſome other collector ſhould catch it.

Marg. A long time indeed.

O'Flam. Wasn't it? conſidering that ſhe had two conſultations beſides, deviliſh tough. Mr Margin, I ſhall quit the mortality walk, ſo provide yourſelf as ſoon as you can.

Marg. I hope not.

O'Flam. Why, what will I do? I am ſure the deaths won't keep me alive, you ſee I am already ſtripp'd to my ſhrowd; ſince November, the ſuicide ſeaſon, I have not got ſalt to my porridge.

Enter Sir Thomas Tradewell.

Sir Tho. Is your name Matthew Margin?

Marg. It is, and what then?

Sir Tho. Then, pray what right had you to kill me in your laſt Saturday's paper?

Marg. Kill you!

Sir Tho. Ay, Sir, here the article is; ſurely the law has ſome puniſhment for ſuch inſolent raſcals as you.

Marg. Puniſhment! and for what? but, after all, what injury have you ſuſtained?

Sir Tho. Infinite. All my agents are come poſt out of the country, my houſe is crouded with couſins, to be preſent at the opening my will, and there has been (as it is known ſhe has a very good jointure) no leſs than three propoſals of marriage already made to my relict.

Marg. Let me look at the paragraph. [*Reads.*] "Laſt "night, after eating a hearty ſupper, died ſuddenly, with "his mouth full of cuſtard, Sir Thomas Tradewell, "knight, an amiable companion, an affectionate relation, "and a friend to the poor."—O'Flam, this is ſome blunder of yours; for you ſee, here the gentleman is, and alive.

O'Flam. So he ſays, but the devil a one in this caſe would I believe but himſelf; becauſe why, I was told it by Jeremy O'Turlough, his own body chairman, my dear: by the ſame token, I treated him with a pint of porter for the good news.

Sir Tho. Vaſtly oblig'd to you, Mr O'Flam, but I have nothing to do with this wretched fellow; it is you, Margin, ſhall anſwer for this.

Marg. Why, Sir Thomas, it is impoſſible but now and then we muſt kill a man by miſtake. And in ſome meaſure

ſure to make amends, you ſee what a good character the paper has given you.

Sir Tho. Character!

Marg. Ay, Sir, I can tell you I have had a crown for putting in many a worſe.

O'Flam. Aye, Sir Thomas, conſider of that, only think what a comfort it is, to live long enough after you are dead, to read ſuch a good account of yourſelf in the papers.

Sir Tho. Ha! ha! ha! what a ridiculous raſcal! but I would adviſe you, gentlemen, not to take ſuch liberties with me for the future. [*Exit.*

O'Flam. Indeed and we won't; and I here give Mr Margin my word, that you ſhan't die again, as long as you live, unleſs indeed we get it from under your own hand.

Enter Sir Robert Riſcounter, *and* Sir James Biddulph.

Sir Rob. Where is this Margin, this impudent, raſcally printer?

Marg. Hey day! what's the matter now?

Sir Ja. Curb your choler, Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. A pretty fellow, indeed, that every man's and woman's reputation muſt be ſubject to the power of his poiſonous pen.

Sir Ja. A little patience, Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. A land of liberty, this! I will maintain it, the tyranny exerciſed by that fellow, and thoſe of his tribe, is more deſpotic and galling than the moſt abſolute monarch's in Aſia.

Sir Ja. Well, but—

Sir Rob. Their thrones claim a right only over your perſons and property, whilſt this mungrel, ſquatting upon his joint ſtool, by a ſingle line, proſcribes and ruins your reputation at once.

Sir Ja. Sir Robert, let me crave—

Sir Rob. And no ſituation is ſecure from their inſults. I wonder every man is not afraid to peep into a paper, as it is more than probable that he may meet with a paragraph that will make him unhappy for the reſt of his life.

Marg. But, gentlemen, what is all this buſineſs about?

Sir Rob. About? zounds, Sir, what right had you to ruin my daughter?

Marg. I? I know nothing of you nor your daughter.

Sir Rob.

Sir Rob. Sir James Biddulph, you have it, produce the paper.

Sir Ja. There is no occaſion for that, the affair is ſo recent, I dare ſay the gentleman will remember the paſſage; this, Sir, is the banker, the father, with whoſe daughter you was pleaſed to take thoſe inſolent freedoms, this morning.

Sir Rob. And this, Sir, the amiable baronet, from the weſt end of the town.

Marg. I recollect. Well, gentlemen, if you have brought any paragraphs to contradict the report, I am ready to inſert them directly.

Sir Rob. And ſo, you raſcal, you want us to furniſh freſh food for your paper?

Marg. I do all I can to keep my ſcales even; the charge hangs heavy here; on the other ſide, you may throw in the defence, then ſee which will weigh down the other.

Sir Rob. Indeed, Sir James Biddulph, if he does that—

Sir Ja. That? can that paltry expedient atone for his crime? will the ſnow that is ſullied recover its luſtre? ſo tender and delicate, Sir Robert, is the fame of a lady, that once tainted, it is tarniſh'd for ever.

Sir Rob. True enough.

Marg. I could bear no ill will to your daughter, as I know nothing about her.

Sir Rob. Indeed, Sir James, I don't ſee how he could.

Sir Ja. Is his being the inſtrument of another man's malice a ſufficient excuſe?

Sir Rob. So far from it, that it enhances the guilt.—Zounds, Sir James, you are a parliament man, why don't you put an end to this practice?

Marg. Ay, let them attack the preſs, if—

Sir Rob. Have a care of that; no no, that muſt not be done.

Sir Ja. No man, Sir Robert, honours that ſacred ſhield of freedom more than myſelf.

Sir Rob. I dare ſay.

Sir Ja. But I would not have it ſerve to ſhelter theſe peſts, who point their poiſon'd arrows againſt the peace of mankind.

Sir Rob. By no means in the world. Let them be dragg'd from behind it directly.

Marg.

Marg. Ay, do deſtroy the watchful dogs that guard and cover your flocks.

Sir Ja. You guard! you cover!

Marg. Ay, who but us alarm the nation when bad deſigns are on foot?

Sir Rob. In that reſpect they are very uſeful, no doubt.

Sir Ja. Are they therefore entitled to give the alarm, when no ſuch deſign is intended?

Sir Rob. By no means. A pack of factious, infamous ſcoundrels.

Marg. It is we that ſupply the defects of the laws.

Sir Ja. You!

Marg. By ſtigmatizing thoſe offenders that they cannot reach.

Sir Rob. That, indeed, ſerves to keep the guilty in awe.

Sir Ja. And is a pretence for making the innocent the butts of their malice.

Sir Rob. True, true, all is fiſh that comes to their nets.

Sir Ja. Beſides, their ſlander is ſcattered ſo generally, and with ſo little diſcretion, that the deformity of vice is deſtroyed.

Sir Rob. True.

Sir Ja. Bad men are made worſe, by becoming totally callous, and even the good rendered careleſs, to that ſource of patriotiſm, that pride of virtue, the public opinion.

Sir Rob. And they are much in the right on't.

Marg. What, you are a courtier, I reckon? no wonder you wiſh the preſs was demoliſhed.

Sir Ja. If ever that happens, to ſuch miſcreants as you 'twill be owing; nor will it ſurpriſe me, if all orders concur to give up a great public benefit, for the ſake and ſecurity of private honour and peace.

Sir Rob. Nor me neither.

Marg. You will conſent then to ſurrender the preſs?

Sir Rob. I would ſooner conſent to be hang'd.

Sir Ja. And its unbounded licence continue?

Sir Rob. I would much rather ſee it on fire.

Marg. With reſpect to its general uſe—

Sir Rob. Not the ſmalleſt doubt can be made.

Sir Ja. But, Sir Robert, then the abuſe—

Sir Rob. Is what no mortal can bear.

Marg. But, Sir Robert, you would but juſt now—

Sir Rob. I confeſs it, I did.

Sir Ja.

Sir Ja. Ay, but that was, Sir Robert, becauſe—
Sir Rob. For no other reaſon in life.
Marg. My obſervation you allowed to be—
Sir Rob. Pointed.
Sir Ja. And my reply—
Sir Rob. Concluſive as could be.
Marg. But then—
Sir Rob. To be ſure.
Sir Ja. Becauſe why—
Sir Rob. You are quite in the right.

O'Flam. Upon my ſoul, they have got the old gentleman into ſuch puzzleation, that I don't believe he knows what he wiſhes himſelf. Stand by and let me clear up this matter a little. Hearkee, Mr Sir Robert, if I underſtand your maning at all, it is, that provided people could be prevented from publiſhing, you are willing the preſs ſhould be free.

Sir Rob. That was my meaning no doubt.

O'Flam. Upon my conſcience, and nothing but reaſon. There, I believe, we are all of us agreed. How ſeldom would people differ, if once we could get them to be all of a mind? And now this difference is whole and compos'd, let me try if I can't make up the other. I underſtand here, old gentleman, you have had a daughter abuſed.

Sir Rob. Moſt foully.

O'Flam. And you want to know who was the author?

Sir Rob. That was my ſole buſineſs here.

O'Flam. Then why could not you ſay ſo at firſt, without all this bothering and bawling? Well, Mr Margin, come give the old buck ſatisfaction.

Marg. It was anonymous.

O'Flam. Upon my ſoul, and I thought ſo. That is the moſt damnedſt, impudent ſon of a bitch, he had like to have brought me into three or four ſcrapes, by fathering his lies upon me.

Sir Ja. Will you give us leave to look at the hand?

Marg. Freely, this is the paper.

Sir Ja. Sir Robert, do you recollect to have ſeen this writing before?

Sir Rob. It is James's, I know it as well as my own: here are his B's, his G's, and his T's.

Sir Ja. So I gueſs'd. Will you truſt the paper wi[th]

Sir Rob. Let him get it again, if he can.—Sir James, I ſhall expect you at home. [*Exit.*

Marg. I hope no bad uſe will be made of it.

Sir Ja. The worſt uſe has already been made of it; but at parting, Mr Margin, let me give you a piece of advice. Take care how you provoke the public patience too far. You have ſet the laws at defiance, and long reign'd uncontroul'd, I confeſs; but don't wonder if the ſubjects of your ſlander forget there are laws in their turn, and, valuing an honeſt name more than their lives, ſhould expoſe their lives to revenge it. [*Exit.*

O'Flam. Upon my ſoul, Mr Margin, very wholſome advice, and will do you much good if you take it; but, above all, rid your hands of James Anonymous as ſoon as you can; you know it was he got you that beating.—That fellow has brought you into more ſcrapes than all your authors together.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Gentlemen, the milk porridge is ready.

All. Let us ſtart fair I beſeech you. [*Exeunt,*

Enter Lady Riſcounter, Lucy, *and* Kitty.

Lady Riſ. Sir James Biddulph is gone?

Kit. Yes, Madam, and with him my maſter.

Lady Riſ. Sir Robert! to what place, can you gueſs?

Kit. I ſhould think, by what I overheard, to the printer's.

Lady Riſ. To the printer's! of what uſe can that be?

Kit. I can't ſay; but your ladyſhip, I hope, will excuſe me.

Lady Riſ. Excuſe you, why child, what's the matter?

Kit. I have heard ſome whiſpering among the clerks, as if things were not quite ſo well with my maſter.

Lady Riſ. What, ſome little diſappointments in trade?

Kit. Much worſe, I am afraid; I don't know what it means; but they ſay an extent is brought into the houſe.

Lady Riſ. With all my heart; let what will happen, it can be of little importance to me.

Lucy. No, Madam!

Lady Riſ. No, child, you can't ſuppoſe, but upon my marriage, I took care, at all events, to ſecure a proper proviſion.

Lucy, Indeed! can that be done?

Lady Riſ.

Lady Rif. A common caution, my dear; don't you ſee Mrs Paduaſoy rides in her coach, whilſt half her huſband's creditors are in gaol.

Lucy. Is that the caſe?

Lady Rif. If wives were to have any thing to do with thoſe kind of creatures, who d'ye think would marry with people in buſineſs? and now I think on't, it will be ſo much the better; for the father's failure muſt in ſome meaſure fall on the daughter.

Lucy. True; but your ladyſhip ſaw Sir James Biddulph.

Lady Rif. For a moment only, my dear.

Lucy. Well, Madam, and—

Lady Rif. I only juſt threw out a hint; to be more explicit now would make him ſuſpicious; we muſt give him time to digeſt his diſappointment.

Kit. As I live, Miſs Lydia is coming.

Lady Rif. Lydia!

Enter Lydia.

Lyd. I beg your ladyſhip's pardon, for intruding without your permiſſion; but my unfortunate ſituation will, I hope, plead my excuſe: I come, Madam, to beg your protection.

Lady Rif. Mine, child?

Lyd. Your aſſiſtance, in detecting the authors of this horrid deſign.

Lady Rif. That, child, is properly your father's concern.

Lyd. True, Madam; but the relation your ladyſhip bears to his family might, I hope, induce you to do me this juſtice.

Lady Rif. Juſtice, Lydia!—as it is my duty, I ſhall ever be ready to give my advice.

Lyd. That, Madam, is all that I want.

Lady Rif. As this affair has made ſuch a noiſe, there remains but one ſtep to be taken.

Lyd. Which is—

Lady Rif. A marriage with James.

Lyd. With James! and ſo ſanctify the ſcandalous ſtory.

Lady Rif. It may be alleged by the family, that the ceremony had paſs'd before the detection.

Lyd.

Lyd. Detection! I hope your ladyſhip does not ſuppoſe there is the ſmalleſt foundation—

Lady Riſ. That I ſhall not pretend to determine. But, at all events, you are in the right to deny it.

Lyd. Your ladyſhip's indifference ſhocks me more than the—Your daughter, Lucy, will do me juſtice I am ſure, ſhe has been privy to every—

Lucy. Me, Miſs? I beg pardon for that: how ſhould I know your intrigues? I beg you will not involve me in your guilt.

Lyd. Nay, then it is in vain to ſtruggle; I ſee my ruin is reſolved.

Enter Sir Robert.

Sir Rob. Where is Lady Riſcounter? well, my dear, we have got to the bottom of this infernal buſineſs at laſt—here, here it is, in the raſcal's own hand.

Lady Riſ. Sir Robert!

Sir Rob. Why, the paragraph was ſent to the printer's by James.

Lady Riſ. Well?

Sir Rob. So that, you ſee, proves the forgery plain.

Lady Riſ. Now I think it makes the fact more apparent.

Sir Rob. How?

Lady Riſ. By the confeſſion of one of the parties.

Sir Rob. That I confeſs, as it was voluntary—

Lady Riſ. Makes it amount to a poſitive proof.

Sir Rob. It looks very ſuſpicious indeed.

Enter Sir James Biddulph.

Sir Rob. Here my lady, Sir James, thinks, that inſtead of clearing, this paper only ſerves to convince her.

Sir Ja. Is that your ladyſhip's judgment?

Lady Riſ. Quite to a demonſtration, Sir James.

Sir Ja. But his policy.

Lady Riſ. Obvious enough; to force the family to ſolicit his marrying the girl, as a favour.

Sir Ja. That, indeed!

Lady Riſ. With the hopes of obtaining ſome additional advantage.

Sir Rob. In return no doubt for his great condeſcenſion. An infamous—

Sir Ja. I ſhould have thought the young lady's private fortune,

fortune, and perſon, eſpecially to one of his rank, a very ſufficient inducement. But this Mr James is an abſolute Machiavel.

Sir Rob. As ſly a dog as ever exiſted.

Sir Ja. But could not we ſee him, Sir Robert?

Sir Rob. The raſcal is run off.

Sir Ja. Indeed.

Sir Rob. We have ſearch'd for him all the town over.

Sir Ja. That is unlucky, as I ſhould have been glad to have aſk'd him a queſtion. I believe it is unneceſſary to apologize to the family for any part I take in this buſineſs.

Sir Rob. We are all highly obliged.

Sir Ja. But I have received a letter, the contents of which aſtoniſh me much.

Sir Rob. About the matter in hand?

Sir Ja. Indeed the writer is but a dependent of mine, but his veracity is out of the queſtion, the facts muſt ſpeak for themſelves. Mrs Kitty, you will be kind enough to ſtay here for a moment.

Kit. What can be the meaning of this?

Sir Ja. If the charge is falſe, I am ſure, Lady Riſcounter will pardon me for the ſake of the motive. If true, ſhe, in her turn, will ſtand in want of all our forgiveneſs.

Lady Riſ. Me! who will dare to impeach my conduct, Sir James?

Sir Ja. Your Ladyſhip's patience, a moment. This paper, Sir Robert, charges Lady Riſcounter with being the ſole contriver of this villainous project.

Sir Rob. How!

Lady Riſ. Me!

Sir Ja. With a view of diſſolving the contract between your fair daughter and me.

Sir Rob. To what purpoſe? what end?

Sir Ja. One that does me too much honour, I own, the bringing about a union between Miſs Lucy and me.

Lady Riſ. A moſt probable ſtory, indeed: your informer's name, if you pleaſe.

Sir Ja. A ſervant who has oft attended me here.

Lady Riſ. And he receiv'd it from—

Sir Ja. One of your ladyſhip's women; there ſhe ſtands, I believe.

Lyd. Is it poſſible that you, Kitty—

Sir Rob. Patience, Lydia, a moment.

Lady Rif. And you think this paltry plot, obviouſly fram'd by a couple of ſervants (unleſs you condeſcend to be the contriver yourſelf), will juſtify you in bringing this charge againſt a perſon of my rank and condition.

Sir Rob. Fie, fie, Sir James, that is too preſumptuous indeed.

Sir Ja. Why, I ſhould not have ventur'd, I believe, if I had not to produce a more unexceptionable witneſs than theſe.

Lady Rif. Name the perſon directly.

Sir Ja. Lady Riſcounter herſelf.

Sir Rob. What?

Sir Ja. There is a little billet contain'd in this letter, where your ladyſhip promiſes a capital ſum, when ſome certain ſervices are fully perform'd.

Sir Rob. By your leave, Sir James, let me look. Oh clear, clear, it is her hand, there is no denying of this.

Sir Ja. I fancy Mrs Kitty will own it. Otherwiſe my ſervant is below to confront her.

Sir Rob. Well, what reply do you make to all this?

Kit. I beg pardon, Sir, of my miſtreſs, and you.

Sir Rob. Pardon.

Kit. I own the accuſation is juſt, though I little thought Mr Robin would betray me.

Sir Rob. Do you? and what an ungrateful wretch muſt you be? you have been but a poor inſtrument only. But is it poſſible you, Lady Riſcounter, could ſo entirely forget what you owe to me, and your—

Lady Rif. I ſee, Sir Robert, you are ſo far prepoſſeſs'd, that all I can ſay—

Sir Rob. Say, Madam, what can be ſaid for ſuch—

Lady Rif. Nay, Sir, I am not going to make a formal defence, it is not worth my while, nor would you have leiſure to hear it: if you will walk down, you will find another ſort of buſineſs, that demands your attention.

Sir Rob. Madam!

Lady Rif. The houſe fill'd with a new kind of cuſtomers.

Lyd. Sir Rob. Sir Ja. How!

Lady Rif. Only an extent, to ſeize on all his effects.

Lyd. Sir Rob. Sir Ja. Is it poſſible!

Lady Rif. The world will therefore ſee how ill I am treated—but don't imagine, Sir Robert, that the proviſion

I derive from her father, ſhall be laviſhed to leſſen your debts, or be employed in ſupport of their author.

Lucy. Your ladyſhip will have more prudence, no doubt.

Lady Riſ. No, child, we will quit this manſion directly, and leave him for conſolation to the care of his daughter.

Lyd. A more precious truſt I could never receive. Your treachery to me, Madam, I could both deſpiſe and forgive: but your inſolent triumph, at the diſtreſs of an unfortunate huſband, gives you a pre-eminence above the worſt of your ſex. If, Sir, what you are pleaſed to call mine, can either reinſtate, or aſſiſt you, I beg it may be all employ'd in the ſervice.

Sir Rob. Nay, pr'ythee, Lydia—

Lyd. You ſee, Sir James Biddulph, there are new obſtacles oppos'd to your purpoſe.

Sir Ja. If you mean thoſe her ladyſhip has been pleaſed to produce, they add only an additional ſtrength to my wiſhes. The piety with which this great, this firſt duty is diſcharged, muſt accompany every other relation in life. I applaud, and ſhall be happy to join in your purpoſe.

Lady Riſ. Come, Lucy, let us leave theſe romantic creatures together, they are only fit for each other; when your effects are conveyed to proper truſtees, I ſhall take care to put in my claim.

[*Exeunt* Lady Riſcounter *and* Lucy.

Sir Rob. Unfeeling, inſolent woman! but thy goodneſs, Lydia, ſupplies every loſs, nor will my creditors, when they find I never deceiv'd them, take advantage of thy filial affection.

Enter a Clerk.

What now?

Clerk. The Dutch mail is arrived.

Sir Rob. Any private letters from Holland?

Clerk. Your correſpondents, Sir, have honour'd your bills.

Sir Rob. And diſcharg'd them?

Clerk. Every one.

Sir Rob. And the report of their failing—

Clerk. Was without the ſmalleſt foundation.

Sir Rob. Heaven be prais'd; now, Lydia, thy father can look again with confidence in the face of his friends.

Lyd.

Lyd. A more real tranſport could never have reach'd me!

Sir Rob. I know it, Lydia, I know it. This gentleman will both thank and reward you.

Clerk. Sir, I would beg juſt to—

Sir Rob. I gueſs what you mean; ſome inquiſitive perſons below; they ſhall be ſatisfied ſoon. I will attend them directly. [*Exit Clerk.*

Sir Ja. Give me leave to join in the general joy But what, Sir Robert, ſhall we do with this paper? I fancy my man is in waiting; Robin.

Enter Robin.

Rob. Sir.

Sir Ja. You have been of ſingular ſervice to-day, which I ſhall take good care to acknowledge. The worth of this note, as the conditions have fail'd—

Rob. Like many more of its kindred, is reduc'd to waſte paper, your Honour; but as this happy turn has been chiefly owing to Kitty, I hope ſhe will be reſtor'd to favour again.

Sir Ja. But conſider, Robin, that was not her intention.

Rob. But recollect, Sir, the temptation—

Sir Rob. But the treachery—

Rob. Five hundred pounds.

Sir Rob. That is true—as many, her ſuperiors, though perhaps not her betters, are daily detected in doing things more criminal for leſs conſideration, it is ſome excuſe, I confeſs. But what ſays my Lydia?

Lyd. I ſhall be directed by you.

Sir Rob. And now, my children, nothing remains but the laſt act, to eſtabliſh your union, and if (as I am reſolved to diſengage myſelf from that bad woman, and the other cares of this world) you would ſuffer me to be a partaker of your domeſtic felicity—

Sir Ja. Lyd. You cannot in any thing oblige us ſo much.

Sir Rob. That is all I have to aſk of you, or the world. [*Exeunt.*

THE

THE

COZENERS;

A COMEDY,

IN

THREE ACTS.

PROLOGUE.

Written by Mr GARRICK.—Spoken by Mr FOOTE.

IN trifling works of Fancy, wits agree,
That nothing tickles like a ſimile:
And ſo, by way of tuning you to laughter,
With which I hope you'll tickle us hereafter,
From our poetic ſtorehouſe, we produce
A couple, ſpick and ſpan for preſent uſe.
Dramatic writers were, like watchmen, meant
To knock down vice—few anſwer the intent:
Both ſhould be quick to ſee and ſeize their game;
But both are ſometimes blind, and ſometimes lame.
Can thoſe cry *ſtand*, while they themſelves are reeling?
Can thoſe catch thieves, while they themſelves are ſtealing?
When wanted moſt, the watch a nap will take—
Are all our comic authors quite awake?
Or, what is woreſ, by which they ſtill come near 'em,
Are not you more than half aſleep who hear 'em?
I, your old watchman, here have fix'd my ſtand,
On many a vice and folly laid my hand:
'Twas you cried *Watch!* I limp'd at your command.
Let me, like other watchmen, bleſs the times,
And take the privilege to nod betimes;
Nor let your frowns now force me on a fright
To cry—— "*Paſt ſeven o'clock, and a cloudy night.*"
But, with your patience, not to be too free,
We'll change the ſubject and the ſimile.
To chace a ſmuggling crew, who law deride,
We launch a cutter of three guns this tide:
With your aſſiſtance, we will make the foe
Sink, or ſubmit to Captain TIMBERTOE.
Ye pirate critics, fall not foul on me!
If once I ſink, I founder in the ſea.
In this condition, can I ſwim to ſhore?
I'm cork'd, 'tis true; but then I want an oar.
You oft have ſav'd my little bark from ſinking:
I am no fiſh, ſave me from water-drinking!

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr Aircaſtle,	Mr Foote.
Toby,	Mr Weston.
Mr O'Flannagan,	Mr Bannister.
Colonel Gorget,	Mr Aickin.
Flaw,	Mr Wilson.
Tom,	Mr Fearon.
Moſes Manaſſes,	Mr Burton.
Roger,	Mr Griffith.
Hellebore,	Mr Baddeley.
Prig,	Mr Parsons.
Servant,	

Mrs Fleece'em,	Miſs Sherry.
Mrs Simony,	Mrs Gardner.
Mrs Aircaſtle,	Miſs Platt.
Betſey Bloſſom,	Mrs Jewell.
Marianne,	Mrs Smith.
Maid,	

ACT I.

Enter Mrs Fleece'em *and* Flaw.

Mrs Fl. NOT a word more! you put me out of all patience.

Flaw. Well, but, Madam Fleece'em, liſten, I beg, to a little reaſon.

Mrs Fl. Reaſon? had you the leaſt atom about you you would reſt contented with our preſent agreement.

Flaw. But ſurely, Madam, a change of circumſtances—

Mrs Fl. Change? and pray, Mr Flaw, how are mine changed for the better? Anſwer me a few ſhort queſtions, and deny what I ſay, if you can. When I was compelled, by the cruel laws of this country, to go into exile for taking, by miſtake, a ſmall parcel of lace out of a ſhop in the Strand, did not I chuſe Boſton for my place of retirement?

Flaw. Granted.

Mrs Fl. Did not I paſs there, by means of letters from Mynheer Van Smuggle of Rotterdam, for a perſon moſt honourably and nobly allied?

Flaw. For aught I know.

Mrs Fl. Did not I receive a handſome preſent from that merchant, for promoting the running Dutch teas, and rejecting thoſe imported from England?

Flaw. Like enough.

Mrs Fl. Did not my burning the firſt pound of Souchong, and my ſpeeches at Faneuil-Hall, and the Liberty Tree, againſt the colonies contributing to diſcharge a debt to which they owe their exiſtence, procure me the love and eſteem of the people?

Flaw. May be ſo.

Mrs Fl. And what, but your letters, could induce me to return to a country where I had been treated ſo ill? But ſure, you muſt have forgot your propoſals; here they are, and ſigned by yourſelf. Let me ſee!—[*Reads*] "Ar-
" ticles of agreement between Philip Flaw, of Thavies-
" Inn, in the city of London, on one part, and Felicia
" Fleece'em, late of Boſton, but now of Pall-Mall."

Flaw. But what occaſion—

Mrs Fl. " *Imprimis*, That the ſaid Felicia do take a
" handſome houſe, at the weſt end of the town, with ſuit-

" able ſervants ; for the furniſhing of which the ſaid Flaw " engages to procure her credit."

Flaw. And have not I?

Mrs Fl. " Secondly, that the ſaid Flaw ſhall circulate, " privately and publicly, in taverns, coffeehouſes, jour- " nals, chronicles, morning and evening poſts, and cou- " rants, that the ſaid Felicia is a perſon of great addreſs " and abilities ; and that, by means of many powerful " connections, ſhe is able to procure poſts, places, pre- " ferments of all conditions and ſizes ; to raiſe caſh for " the indigent, and procure good ſecurities for ſuch as are " wealthy ; ſuitable matches for people who want huſ- " bands and wives, and divorces for thoſe who wiſh to " get rid of them."

Flaw. And have not I performed every tittle ? have not my expences in attending plays, operas, maſquerades, and pantheons, not to mention ſubſcription-money to moſt of the clubs and coteries, amounted to a moſt enormous—

Mrs Fl. I am near at an end.—[*Reads.*] " That the " ſaid Flaw ſhall at all times adviſe the ſaid Felicia how " far ſhe may go without incurring the law ; for all which " he is to receive out of the neat profits thirty per cent." —You ſee, Sir !

Flaw. I do.

Mrs Fl. And don't you think that a very ample proviſion ?

Flaw. But conſider, Madam, I have ſacrificed my whole time to your buſineſs, and I don't believe the law has procured me—

Mrs Fl. The law? What, a little private agency at the Old Bailey ? a wonderful ſacrifice ! fy, fy, Mr Flaw !

Flaw. You are the laſt perſon, Mrs Fleece'em, that ſhould caſt ſuch a reflection as that : unleſs I miſtake, my attendance there was pretty uſeful to you.

Mrs Fl. To me ?

Flaw. Without my ſkill and addreſs, your laſt voyage to America would have been changed to a much ſhorter trip.

Mrs Fl. Sir !

Flaw. A tour to Tyburn, in a tim-whiſky and two, would have concluded your travels.

Mrs Fl. Why, you impertinent, infamous, petty-fogging puppy, it was through your ignorance that I was obliged to travel at all.

Flaw.

Flaw. Mine?

Mrs Fl. Did not Alick Alibi, before your face, at Blackwall, in the tranſport, declare, that he never ſaw ſuch a bungling buſineſs; that if he had been employed—

Flaw. Alibi?

Mrs Fl. You know him, I fancy.

Flaw. Perfectly: as, Madam, you think him ſo wonderfully clever, you had better employ him; I am ready to reſign in his favour.

Mrs Fl. That is ungenerous in you, Mr Flaw, to inſult a gentleman under misfortunes: you know the clipping and filing affair compels him to keep a little private at preſent.

Flaw. Oh, then, that's the reaſon I am conſulted? ſweet Madam, your ſervant! but, Madam, I muſt deſire you to find out ſome other agent: I declare off! you ſha'n't make a ſtop-gap of me!

Mrs Fl. Sir!

Flaw. Our accounts are eaſily ſettled: let me ſee! ſeven pounds ſeven ſhillings, from the brewer's clerk, who is gone with your recommendatory letters to India.

Mrs Fl. Nine pounds, if you pleaſe.

Flaw. Seven. The reſt paid out of my pocket to Kitt Copywell, for manufacturing the letters from the Directors.

Mrs Fl. Very well! have you got the fellow aboard?

Flaw. Sailed the latter end of the week.

Mrs Fl. Then there is the crimp's money for procuring the company an able recruit.

Flaw. Already deducted, for promiſing to get Bob Blueſkin a reprieve at the—

Mrs Fl. Theſe, Mr Flaw, are but trifling affairs; they may be ſettled at ſome other time.

Flaw. I am ready, whenever you pleaſe: and ſo Madam Fleece'em, I am your moſt humble, and very—oh! I had like to have forgot; if any thing ſhould happen, that I may not be blamed, *in futuro*, I would adviſe you to take care of yourſelf: I overheard Luke Lockup, the turnkey, ſay, as you paſſed by in a coach, that he had ſome notion of having ſeen you before, and wanted much to know where you lodged.

Mrs Fl. Luke Lockup? why, how is it poſſible he could—

Flaw. I know nothing of that: foreſeeing, indeed, that ſuch

ſuch a thing might poſſibly happen, I had provided a couple of people to prove that you were ſhipwreck'd on the weſtern coaſt; ſo that, though you were returned before your time from your travels, it was none of your fault; but that is all over now; Mr Alibi will, no doubt, take proper care.

Mrs Fl. Nay, as to that, Mr Flaw, there is no man living to whoſe care I would ſooner truſt myſelf than your own; but ſure in this affair we have been both of us rather too quick. Let us coolly conſider: I am ſure, I am the furtheſt in the world from—but come; let us know what are your further demands?

Flaw. I ſcorn, Madam, to take any advantage: as our riſques and labour are equal, an equal partition; that's all.

Mr. Fl. I conſent to the agreement.

Flaw. Very well. I will prepare a draft to lay before counſel; which, when approved, you will ſign?

Mrs Fl. Without ſcruple; that being ſettled, let us come a little to buſineſs. What new game have you ſprung?

Flaw. Plently, plenty; the family I expected out of the country is come.

Mrs Fl. Father, mother, and ſon! have you ſeen them?

Flaw. I received their note but this inſtant: they have made a little miſtake, I believe, as to their lodgings.

Mrs Fl. How ſo?

Flaw. I adviſed them, at their coming to town, to ſtay at one of the hotels for a week or ten days; inſtead of that, they are got to a bagnio.

Mrs Fl. A bagnio?

Flaw. At the ſign of the Lamb, in Long-Acre.

Mrs Fl. Nay, for aught I know, that place will beſt anſwer our purpoſe.

Flaw. I muſt ſtep directly to the Salopian coffeehouſe; Enſign Gaters is to ſend you a hundred for obtaining him a ſtep in his corps. Here; I have brought you the complimentary cards to put over the chimney.

[*Gives her the cards.*

Mrs Fl. That's right. Let me ſee:—*The Duke of—beſt reſpects—Earl of—Viſcount*—Ah, ah; very well! have you prevailed on the coachman you mentioned?

Flaw. He has promiſed to parade before your houſe for an

an hour, after his maſter is ſet down at the Cockpit. A couple of ſervants to wait at the door, as if the great man was above, will be right.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A note, Sir, from a perſon below.

Flaw. Let us ſee it.—[*Reads.*] "Mr O'Flannagan's compliments to Mr Flaw, and as he perhaps may not chuſe "to be at home to him, being at another body's houſe, "begs to know where he may ſee him this evening."—A bagatelle; ſome trifling affair.

Mrs Fl. You had therefore better diſpatch him at once. Shew him up.

Flaw. He brought me a recommendatory letter this morning; but I was in a hurry, and deſired him to meet me here about this time. Here he is.

Enter Mr O'Flannagan.

O'Flan. Mr Flaw, I am your moſt humble ſervant.—Madam, I am yours unknown.

Flaw. Well, Mr O'Flannagan, what are your commands with me?

O'Flan. Oh, Mr Flaw, we will poſtpone that, if you plaſe: I hope I am a little better bred than to mention any thing of my private affairs before ladies; their little ears, ſweet craturs, ſhould be tickled with nothing but love.

Flaw. True, true; but here you may ſuſpend your politeneſs a little; for, unleſs I am miſtaken, it is to this lady's good offices you muſt be oblig'd in your preſent purſuit.

O'Flan. Oh! that indeed alters the caſe. Why then, Madam, this is my buſineſs at once: you muſt underſtand I came over lately from Limerick; and there, upon my ſoul, all the world are gone mad about running beyond ſea, in ſearch after—I think it is *emigrations* they call them.

Mrs Fl. I have heard, indeed, that there has been a prodigious deſertion.

O'Flan. Prodigious! upon my ſoul, Madam, in a hundred miles riding, I did not meet with a human cratur, except ſheep and oxen, to tell me the road; and I ſhould have loſt myſelf again and again, but for the mile-ſtones, that are ſo kind to anſwer your queſtions without giving you the trouble to aſk them: and ſo, being deſirous to follow

follow my neighbours example, I have, Madam, made bold to come over before them.

Flaw. Right; one would not like to be laſt in the chace.

O'Flan. True. Now, Madam, as ſome emigrations muſt be better than other ſome, I ſhould be glad to be recommended to one of the beſt.

Flaw. Why, that will be no very difficult matter. Let me ſee! is the collector of the window-lights in Falkland's iſland diſpoſed of?

Mrs Fl. I have not heard that it has been given away; but, however, if it ſhould, the ſurveyorſhip of the woods there is vacant, I am ſure.

Flaw. Indeed?

O'Flan. And pray, Madam, is that a lucrative place, as to the profit?

Mrs Fl. Beſides the ſalary, for perquiſites you are to have all the loppings and toppings.

Flaw. Ay! upon my word, if that can be got, you will be a happy man, Mr O'Flannagan.

O'Flan. Without doubt, I ſhall be in very good luck. But pray, Madam, what was the name of the Falklands?

Mrs Fl. Falkland's iſland.

O'Flan. Iſland! true, true. But, Mr Flaw, is it a place one can go to by land? becaaſe why, I'm not over-fond of the ſea; coming over t'other day from Donechedy, it tumbled and jumbled and rumbled me to ſuch a degree!

Mrs Fl. Mr Flaw—

Flaw. I am afraid it will be difficult.

O'Flan. Why then, if it is equally the ſame, I ſhould be glad to have an emigration in ſome other parts.

Mrs Fl. There was a thing that I got yeſterday for a relation of mine, that would have ſuited this gentleman.

O'Flan. Pray, what might that be?

Mrs Fl. A tidewaiter's place in the inland part of America.

O'Flan. Inland! that would juſt do to a T.

Flaw. Why, you may eaſily provide in ſome other way for your couſin.

Mrs Fl. That's true; but then, you know, he has put himſelf to ſome expence, in fitting himſelf out for the—

Flaw. Oh! I dare ſay, Mr O'Flannagan will be glad to reimburſe him.

O'Flan.

O'Flan. That I will; and give him a good ſpill for his reſignation into the bargain.

Mrs Fl. Well, Sir, if you will call here to-morrow, we will try to bring matters to bear; and—

[O'Flannagan *going.*

Flaw. This will be a damn'd fine thing, if you can get it.—Hark'ee a word in your ear! if you diſcharge well your duty, you will be found in tar and feathers for nothing.

O'Flan. Tar and feathers! and what the devil will I do wid them, my dear?

Flaw. When properly mixed, they make a genteel kind of dreſs, which is ſometimes wore in that climate.

O'Flan. Oh! what, I ſuppoſe, a kind of linen, like that at Belfaſt, that the natives malefactor themſelves.

Flaw. True. And they will ſhew you the beſt manner to wear it; it is very light, keeps out the rain, and ſticks extremely cloſe to the ſkin.

O'Flan. Indeed! that is very convanient. Why, as this place ſeems to ſuit me ſo well, before I get the nomination, by way of binding the bargain, had not I better give ſome earneſt beforehand?

Flaw. That will be making things ſure.

O'Flan. Here is a fifty pound note of Latouche's, payable at ſight in a fortnight.

Mrs Fl. Vaſtly well! I ſhall take proper care on't.

O'Flan. I don't doubt it at all. Feathers that keep out the rain? they muſt be ducks, to be ſure, becaaſe they are uſed to the water: I can't help thinking, Mr Flaw, when I have got on the dreſs, how like a gooſe I ſhall look. [*Exit.*

Flaw. Here is the note.

Mrs Fl. This was lucky beyond expectation! If this goes on, in a little time we ſhall grow as rich as a keeper of one of the capital clubs. [*A rap at the door.*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A gentleman below wiſhes to ſee Mr Flaw.

Flaw. What ſort of a perſon?

Serv. Vaſt finely dreſs'd, pleaſe your—

Flaw. Oh! I know. Shew him up!—The Iſraelite I was telling you of.

Mrs Fl. What, Mr Moſes Manaſſes?

Flaw.

Flaw. The ſame.

Enter Moſes Manaſſes.

Walk in, Mr Manaſſes! this, Sir, is the lady.

Moſes. I vas never ſee a more finer vomans ſince I vas born. Madam, I vas take de liberty to beg-a your protection upon a littel affairs.

Mrs Fl. Sir, any friend of Mr Flaw's—

Moſes. I vas live in the ſheety; but I have great ambition to reſide at de court end of de town.

Mrs Fl. City? I could not have imagined that a gentleman of your dreſs and addreſs would ſubmit to live in the city.

Moſes. Madam, you vas exceeding polite, indeed: I always finds de ladies very partial to me; I vas have de honour to be choſe laſt veek maiſter of de ceremony to de Mile-End aſſembly; and Mrs Alderman herſelf make alvays choice of me for de cotilions.

Mrs Fl. I make not the leaſt doubt of your great ſucceſs with the ladies.

Moſes. Oh, Madam!

Flaw. Mr Manaſſes, Madam, is modeſt: the city? his ſucceſs has not been confined to the city; many a heart-ach has he given, to men of conſequence too, let me tell you, on this ſide the Bar.

Moſes. Oh, fy, fy, Mr Flaw!

Flaw. What! don't I know? did not you occaſion the ſeparation between Mrs Modiſh of Marybone and her huſband?

Moſes. Oh, fy, fy! a flam, indeed, Mr Flaw.

Flaw. Pooh! beſides, was not you ſeen during all the laſt ſummer, lounging on horſeback, through all the lone lanes about Chelſea and Fulham, with young lady Harrow-heart?

Moſes. All ſcandal, upon my honour.

Flaw. Zounds! why, have not I heard the young fellows at Betty's, when you have been paſſing by with lady Kitty Carmine, in her new vis-a-vis, exclaim, "Look, "look! there is Moſes again! dammee, I can't conceive "what the ladies can ſee in that pencil-felling, mongrel "Manaſſes! Gad, I fancy he catches women, as people "do quails, with his pipe."

Moſes. Dat is all ſpite, all malice, on my honour!

Mrs Fl.

Mrs Fl. Pipe! what, does he ſing?

Flaw. He? the voice of Squallache, with the taſte and manner of Millico.

Moſes ſings].—" Ven ſaw you my fader?
" Ven ſaw you my moder?

Mrs Fl. I ſee, I ſee: nay, then, I don't wonder.

Flaw. Beſides all this, Mr Moſes is an abſolute Proteus; in every elegance, at the top of the tree.

Mrs Fl. Indeed?

Flaw. From his preſent dreſs, you would think that all his days were ſpent in a drawing room.

Mrs Fl. Without doubt.

Flaw. But were you to ſee him on the turf, at Newmarket, in his Tyburn-topp'd wig, tight boots, and round hat, you would ſwear he had never handled any thing but a curry-comb ſince he was born. Why, he has rid matches.

Mrs Fl. Really?

Flaw. Many.

Moſes. No, Madam; but vone, on my vord; a match with Lord Billy Booty: I vas firſt hard in on a canter; my Lord came ſide by ſide, give a little bit of chuck vid de elbow, and pop me plump into de ditch of de Devil; and de people all hollow!

Mrs Fl. Brutes! very unlucky indeed. But pray, Mr Manaſſes, how can I ſerve you? I ſhould be happy to—

Moſes. Why, Madam, in von vord—I ſhould be glad to be as well wid de gentlemen as Mr Flaw ſay I be wid de ladies; and if, by your aſſiſtance, I could get into de Boodles, de Almacks, or von of de clubs—

Mrs Fl. Bleſs me! is it poſſible that you are not a member?

Moſes. I vas often put up; but dey always give me de black ball.

Mrs Fl. Bleſs me! what can be the meaning of that?

Moſes. I don't know; perhaps my religion was de objection.

Mrs Fl. I ſhould hardly think them ſo ſqueamiſh as that: the dice are indeed often call'd doctors; but, by the large evacuation they cauſe, I ſhould rather think them graduates of phyſic than of divinity: no, no; that can't be the

caſe. Let me ſee!—perhaps you may have had dealings with ſome of the club.

Moſes. Yes; I have de little annuity.

Mrs Fl. Oh ho!—ſo you have been admitted into the Jeruſalem-Chamber?

Moſes. Yes, yes, very often.

Mrs Fl. Oh! then the buſineſs is out; there then is the reaſon at once.

Moſes. How?

Mrs Fl. Some of the parties, I ſuppoſe, ſlow in their payments?

Flaw. And there is nothing thoſe gentlemen dread ſo much as meeting a dun there.

Mrs Fl. But I dare ſay Mr Manaſſes, at ſuch a place, would be above dropping a hint.

Moſes. Oh, fy! Madam, upon no account.

Mrs Fl. Very well! why then, I may venture to aſſure them as much?

Moſes. Sure, vidout doubt.

Flaw. But, however, Madam, tho' ſome of the old dons ſhould be cruſty—

Mrs Fl. To be ſure, means might be uſed to get over that bar.

Flaw. Eaſy enough, I ſhould think.

Mrs Fl. Let us ſee! ſtuffing the negative ſide of the box, that the black balls cannot deſcend.

Flaw. Or advancing or retarding the clock.

Mrs Fl. True; but then the waiters ſhould be properly ſpoke to.

Flaw. Oh, I dare ſay Mr Manaſſes does not mind upon ſuch an occaſion.

Moſes. Oh, not at all; I am ready to part vid de money.

Flaw. I dare ſay. Why, do you conſider that a ſeat there, as Mr Manaſſes can manage—

Mrs Fl. May turn out better for him, perhaps, than a borough.

Moſes. Den I may rely upon you, Madam?

Mrs Fl. Give yourſelf no further trouble about it.

Moſes. I have de honor, Ma'am— [*going.*

Mrs Fl. But ſhould not Manaſſes make a depoſit?

[*Apart to* Flaw.

Flaw. To be ſure.—Mr Manaſſes! well, Sir, I wiſh you joy, Sir: what, we are to have a lottery, I find?

Moſes.

Moſes. Dat is all fixed; dere is no danger of dat. I think, Madam, dere is no finer ſight can be, dan to ſee de lottery-lanthorns hang up in de ſtreets, vid large red letters, write on all ſides; it is ſo noble!

Mrs Fl. An elegant ornament, it muſt be confeſs'd, to a capital city: beſides, if the paſſion for play cannot be ſuppreſs'd, all that human wiſdom can do is to turn private vices to the uſe of the public.

Moſes. True, true.

Flaw. I ſuppoſe you are an adventurer.

Moſes. Ay, ay; I have my ſhare, to be ſure.

Flaw. Mrs Fleece'em was ſaying, that ſhe had ſome thoughts of trying her fortune.

Moſes. By all means; I wiſh her much luck!

Flaw. If you ſhould have any tickets about you—

Moſes. Perhaps de lady may have de fancy to de particular number.

Flaw. No, no; we are not ſuperſtitious as to the number; it is the numbers we wiſh to get at.

Moſes. Dere is, Madam, a couple de ſheets: would you give me de draft on de banker? dey are at preſent muſh above par. Let me ſee!

Flaw. Oh, as to the price, we don't trouble our heads about that; we will ſettle that ſome other time; make a deduction, you know, for what Madam beſtows upon the waiters.

Moſes. True, true! Well, Madam, your moſt humble! you may tell de club dat I ſhall make de very good member; for now and den I love to play a little myſelf.

Mrs Fl. You do?

Moſes. Yes; to ſet de caſter at hazard; and hold de Pharoh-bank wid de cards.

Flaw. Be cautious, or you may meet with your match.

Moſes. Never fear! ven I vas play, I always do keep myſelf up for de purpoſe, like de fighting cock, or de horſe.

Mrs Fl. Very right; for intemperance upon ſuch an occaſion—

Moſes. It would be de devil, as I eats ſo little, and drinks nothing at all,

Flaw. No?

Moſes. No, never at cards; de claret would turn all topſy-turvey;

topſy-turvey: no, no, I muſt take care not to drown Pharoh again in de Red Sea. [*Exit* Manaſſes.

Flaw. and Fl. Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs Fl. Oh! have you advertiſed an honourable ſeat to be ſold?

Flaw. I never neglect buſineſs, you know; but the perpetuating this damn'd bribery-act has thrown ſuch a rub in our way—

Mrs Fl. New acts, like new brooms, make a little buſtle at firſt; but the dirt will return, never fear.—What, have no offers been made?

Flaw. A ſhort note from a broker, who hopp'd out of the Alley into a good eſtate in the north. By the firſt ſhips I expect ſome good ſubjects from the ſiege of Tanjore.

Mrs Fl. A ſure importation of candidates; they come in good time, for in ſuch a country as this what ſignifies caſh without conſequence?

Flaw. True; which in order to get, what they acquire by conqueſt they expend in corruption.

Mrs. Fl. Whilſt perhaps a borough, pretty warmly conteſted, compels the unhappy hero to make a ſecond trip to the eaſt.—[*Knocking.*] Who can that be?

Flaw. Had not I better withdraw?

Mrs Fl. Firſt, ſee who it is.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mrs Simony, Madam, below in a chair.

Flaw. Shew her up, by all means.

Mrs Fl. Simony?

Flaw. The Doctor's lady, about the living, you know.

Mrs Fl. I remember; but I thought the Doctor himſelf a—

Flaw. A little miſtake has made him a little cautious at preſent.

Mrs Fl. A burnt child dreads the—But, pray, what kind of a woman is—

Flaw. An abſolute goſſip: your ſhare in the ſcene will be ſhort: let her run on; ſhe neither expects, nor deſires a reply. Here ſhe is.

Enter Mrs Simony.

Mrs Sim. Madam, I am your obedient, and very devoted! Mr Flaw, I am entirely yours! ten thouſand pardons

dons for waiting upon you in this diſhabille! but I ſtaid ſo late laſt night at Lady Lurchem's aſſembly, that I have had but juſt time to huddle on my things; and now I have not five minutes to ſpare, as I promiſed preciſely at twelve to call on Lady Frolic, to take a turn in Kenſington-Gardens, to ſee both the exhibitions, the ſtain'd glaſs, dwarf, giant, and Cox's muſeum. Mr Flaw, I preſume, has mentioned our little affair. The Doctor would have waited on you himſelf; but men *bum*, and *ha*, and are ſo roundabout, aukward, and ſhy! now I am always for coming plump to the point: beſides, women beſt underſtand one another, you know. But, as I was ſaying, the patron of the buſineſs in queſtion is, as we underſtand, a near friend and relation of yours.

Mrs Fl. Madam, I ſhall be happy to—

Mrs Sim. Your patience, Madam! for I have not a moment to ſpare. Now, as it cannot be ſuppoſed that ſome people ſhould do favours for other people, with which people thoſe people are not acquainted, I am ready to advance—for the Doctor knows nothing about it.

Mrs Fl. How, Madam? I underſtood—

Mrs Sim. The Doctor? not he, I aſſure you, Madam; entirely ignorant, in every reſpect: Now, if ſuch a favour can be obtain'd, I am ready to depoſit, as Mr Flaw has doubtleſs informed you—

Mrs Fl. Why, I can't ſay, Madam, but it is very handſome.

Mrs Sim. Nay, Madam, the party will loſe no credit by doing what is deſired: the Doctor's powers are pretty well known about town; not a more populous preacher within the ſound of Bow-bell; I don't mean for the mobility only; *thoſe* every canting fellow can catch; the beſt people of faſhion ar'n't aſhamed to follow my Doctor: not one, Madam, of the humdrum, drawling, long-winded tribe; he never crams congregations, gives them more than they can carry away; not above ten or twelve minutes at moſt.

Mrs Fl. Indeed?

Mrs Sim. Even the dowager-ducheſs of Drowſy was never known to nod at my Doctor; and then he doeſn't pore, with his eyes cloſe to the book, like a clerk that reads the firſt leſſon; not he! but all extemporary, Madam; with a cambrick handkerchief in one hand, and a diamond ring

on

on the other: and then he waves this way, and that way; and he curtſies, and he bows, and he bounces, that all the people are ready to—But then his wig, Madam! I am ſure you muſt admire his dear wig; not with the buſhy, brown buckles, dangling and dropping like a Newfoudland ſpaniel; but ſhort, rounded off at the ear, to ſhew his plump cherry cheeks; white as a curd, feather-topped, and the curls as cloſe as a cauliflower.

Mrs Fl. Why, really, Madam——

Mrs Sim. Then, my Doctor is none of your ſchiſmatics, Madam; believes in the whole thirty-nine; and ſo he would, if there were nine times as many.

Mrs Fl. Very obedient.

Mrs Sim. Obedient! As humble and meek as a curate; does duly his duties; never ſcruples to bury, though it be but a tradeſman—unleſs, indeed, he happens to be better engaged.

Mrs Fl. Why, with all theſe good qualities, I ſhould think our ſucceſs muſt be certain.

Mrs Sim. With your aſſiſtance, Madam, I have not the leaſt doubt in the world: ſo, Madam, begging your pardon for having intruded ſo long, I leave Mr Flaw and you to confer on the ſubject.—Not a ſtep, I beſeech you.—Lord bleſs me! I had like to have forgot: my memory, as the Doctor ſays, is ſo very tenacious, that it is not one time in twenty I can remember the text. Beſides all I have ſaid, my Doctor, Madam, poſſeſſes a pretty little poetical vein: I have brought you here a little hymn in my pocket.

Mrs Fl. Madam, you are very——

Mrs Sim. Of which the Doctor deſires your opinion.

Mrs Fl. Hymn? then the Doctor ſings, I preſume.

Mrs Sim. Not a better pipe at the playhouſe; he has been long notorious for that: Then he is as cheerful, and has ſuch a choice collection of ſongs! why, he is conſtantly aſked at the great city feaſts; and does, I verily believe, more in-door chriſtnings than any three of the cloth. But this compoſition, Madam, is of a different kind: it is but ſhort; but if the party, your worthy friend and relation, ſhould happen to like the manner of writing, he has a much longer one for his immediate peruſal.—Madam, I am your obſequious, and very devoted——Not a ſtep, my

my good Mr Flaw! my chairmen are, you know, in waiting. [*Exit.*

Mrs Fl. A hymn? what the deuce can the woman mean by a hymn? Let me ſee!—"Promiſe to pay to the "bearer one hundred pounds, for the governor and com-"pany"—Ay, marry, this is coming *plump to the buſineſs*: no man can deny, Mr Flaw, but theſe lines are ſterling. If the Doctor's proſe is as good as his poetry, I don't wonder he has ſo many admirers. But when ſhall I ſee you?

Flaw. Immediately after I have paid my provincials a viſit.

Mrs Fl. Oh, then I may have time to execute a little ſcheme of my own.

Flaw. Of what kind?

Mrs Fl. One that will turn out both pleaſant and profitable: you know the prim mercer, not far from St Paul's?

Flaw. What, young Prig, that preſents an eternal attitude to all hacks of the city, and ſtands in ſtiff buckle before his own ſhop, like a ſign?

Mrs Fl. Even he.

Flaw. The fellow is a fop, to be ſure; but you will not find it an eaſy matter to gull him; the coxcomb is ſuſpicious and guarded.

Mrs Fl. Againſt a common contrivance, perhaps; otherwiſe he would be no object for one of my original genius. Beſides, there is a neceſſity for ſome new ſilks to grace my niece's nuptials, you know.

Flaw. True, true: well, ſucceſs attend you! [*Exit.*

Mrs Fl. Be in no pain about me. Who's there?

Enter a Servant.

Order the carriage to the door; and do you and the coachman put on your beſt liveries.

Serv. Yes, Madam.

Mrs Fl. And, do you hear, John? if they ſhould be inquiſitive, where I ſtop, as to my place of abode, give 'em no information: I ſhould be ſorry to have it known, that one of my rank and fortune was pent up in a paltry lodging.

Serv. Your ladyſhip need be under no fears.

Mrs Fl. If, at coming from the mercer's, where I ſhall go firſt, the maſter of the ſhop ſhould get into the coach, drive

drive to Dr Hellebore's, who you know is famous for curing of mad folks; the third door to the left in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Serv. I ſhall give the coachman directions.

Mrs Fl. And, John! if any body ſhould call in my abſence, let them know that I am gone, with the Counteſs of Carnaby, to ſee the preparations for the great trial in Weſtminſter-Hall.

Serv. Mighty well, Madam. [*Exit.*

Mrs Fl. That fellow has uncommon talents, for one of his ſtation: what a matchleſs porter would he make to a great miniſter! for he lies like an attorney, and his muſcles are as ſteady as thoſe of his maſter. [*Exit.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Bagnio. Enter Flaw *followed by* Tom.

Flaw. HAVE not you a family here, that came lately out of the country?

Tom. I ſuppoſe you mean, Sir, Mr Aircaſtle.

Flaw. I do; is the gentleman within?

Tom. In the back dining-room, up one pair of ſtairs.

Flaw. Will you let him know there is a perſon wiſhes to ſee him? If he wants to know my name—

Tom. I can tell him.

Flaw. Ay? why, have we been ever acquainted?

Tom. What! have you forgot Tom, Mr Flaw, at the Crown and Rolls in Chancery-Lane?

Flaw. I recollect. But I thought, by this time, you had ſet up for yourſelf: you ſeemed in a pretty good way.

Tom. Pretty well, Maſter, for that part of the town: but, Lord, Sir, the penurious pence of the lawyers won't do for us, who are the ſuperior knights of the napkin; after poring an hour over a ſix and eight-penny bill, "Here, Tom, give us change! and mind, there is a groat for yourſelf:" How was it poſſible to ſupport a girl and a gelding upon ſuch a two-penny tax? it could not be.

Flaw. That is true, indeed.

Tom. No, no. So, dipping pretty deeply in debt, I got

a friendly commiſſion of bankruptcy to diſcharge my old ſcores, and removed to this end of the town.

Flaw. Where you thrive, without doubt.

Tom. To give you a ſample—It was but laſt night, Sir Ralph Riot moved, that every man in the club ſhould give the waiter two guineas a piece, juſt by way of *ſurpriſing* the raſcal.

Flaw. And it was carried?

Tom. Oh, *nem. con.*—the members never flinch at a frolic.

Flaw. I wiſh you joy of your ſtation!—But pray, by what accident came the family above to your houſe? There muſt have been ſome miſtake in the matter; for they are people of very good reputation.

Tom. I can't gueſs. Only that the town is thin, and buſineſs begins to grow dead, we ſhould hardly have given them admittance; they are a ſtrange unaccountable tribe: Pray, who the deuce are they?

Flaw. A reſpectable family, from the county of Wilts, with a very good landed eſtate, I aſſure you.

Tom. On which, I ſuppoſe, the 'ſquire condeſcends to kill his own meat; and madam, his lady, to dreſs it: Then it is one eternal wrangle between them, conducted in a language pretty near as coarſe as their carter's.

Flaw. They have been bred in a ſtate of nature, Tom.

Tom. The huſband, for once or twice, is entertaining enough: He ſets out to inform you in a moſt material point, as he thinks, which he forſakes in an inſtant to follow ſome other circumſtance, not material at all; this he ſoon quits for another, and ſoon for another, if you will give him attention. He puts me in mind of a pack of hounds in a hare-warren; by eternally ſhifting the game, the purſuit never ends.

Flaw. You have him, Tom; Mr Aircaſtle is, I own, very prolix and digreſſive.

Tom. Unleſs I am miſtaken, the ſon has an old acquaintance here in the houſe.

Flaw. Ay?

Tom. Miſs Betſy Bloſſom, one of our ladies, who comes, I fancy, from their part of the world: ſhe wiſhes to avoid the father and mother, but hints that ſhe has good reaſon to remember the ſon.

Flaw. Perhaps ſo.

Tom. Madam the mother too, who is ſtill a jolly briſk dame, ſeems determined to make the moſt of her time.

Flaw. How ſo?

Tom. She has diſpatched, this morning, a billet to Col. Gorget, an old maſter of mine.

Flaw. If they are at preſent alone, you will be ſo kind to announce me.

Tom. Thoſe ſtairs lead to their door; there is no occaſion for a maſter of the ceremonies. [*Exit Flaw.* Miſs! Miſs Betſy!

Enter Betſy.

Well; have you encountered your Corydon?

Betſy. No; I have carefully kept myſelf out of his way.

Tom. Then now throw yourſelf into it as ſoon as you can; for, unleſs you prevent it, I can foreſee a deſign to diſpoſe of him in a very different manner.

Betſy. In the interim, I could wiſh to have him all to myſelf; no danger of an interruption from the father and mother.

Tom. Watch then when they are out of the way. But remember you run no riſk in over-acting your part; treat him with a large diſh of daggers, death, and deſpair.

Betſy. Never fear; I know how to proportion my doſe.

Tom. Are you prepared with the two verſes I gave you?

Betſy. Yes, yes; and I warrant will thunder them with good effect in his ears.

Tom. Succeſs attend you, my girl! [*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to another room.

Mr and Mrs Aircaſtle *diſcovered.*

Air. Well, well, mark the end on't! this will turn out like all the reſt of your projects.

Mrs Air. Bleſs me, Mr Aircaſtle, will you never give over your grumblings? I thought I had convinced you, before you left home, that London was the only ſpot for people to thrive in.

Air. Convinced me? Did not I tell you what Parſon Prunello ſaid—I remember Mrs Lightfoot was by—ſhe had been brought to bed, that day was a month, of a very fine boy—a bad birth; for Dr Seeton, who ſerved his time with Luke Lancet of Guiſe's—there was a talk about him

him and Nancy the daughter—ſhe afterwards married Will Whitlow, another apprentice, who had great expectations from an old uncle in the Grenades; but he left all to a diſtant relation, Kit Cable, a midſhipman aboard the Torbay—ſhe was loſt, coming home, in the Channel—the captain was taken up by a coaſter from Rye, loaded with cheeſe——

Mrs Air. Mercy upon me, Mr Aircaſtle, at what a rate you run on! What has all this to do with our coming to London?

Air. Why, I was going to tell you; but you will never have patience!

Mrs Air. More than ever woman poſſeſſed. Would you, I ſay, be contented to ſpring, grow, and decay, in the ſame country ſpot, like a cabbage?

Air. Yes; provided I left behind me ſome promiſing ſprouts.

Mrs Air. What! have you no ambition? no ſoul? could you be eaſy to ſtand ſtock-ſtill, whilſt your neighbours are advancing all round you? Cottagers are become farmers; farmers are made juſtices; and folks that travelled barefoot to London, roll down again in their coaches and chariots; but ſtill we ſtick!

Air. What then? For, as Counſellor Crab ſaid at the aſſizes—he came down to plead for Ned Nick'em, who won at Bath a large ſum of Lord Luckleſs—the principal witneſs was Chriſtopher Cogg'em—who was condemned to the pillory; but ſaved by Phil Fang the attorney—who——

Mrs Air. What matters what any body ſaid? but you are always flying from the——

Air. Why, what a pox would the woman be at?—Ha'n't I lopp'd off a handſome limb of my land to put your hopeful project in practice?

Mrs Air. Well; and muſt not every body who ventures in the lottery of life firſt pay for his ticket?

Air. I believe Toby will hardly thank me for going into the wheel.

Mrs Air. No; I ſuppoſe he would rather ſtay at home, and marry Bet Bloſſom: a pretty alliance he had like to have given us!

Air. But you know I drove the girl out of the pariſh.

Mrs

Mrs Air. Are there none of the ſame ſtamp left behind?

Air. Well, well, here we are, and what's to be done?

Mrs Air. Our firſt buſineſs is to get Toby diſpoſed of; upon your head, we will conſult Mr Flaw; as to my affairs, leave me to myſelf.

Air. And as for Toby, the beſt method, you think, will be——

Mrs Air. To advertiſe the boy, to be ſure.

Air. Do you think ſo? Advertiſe Toby? I was once told by Tom Type, a printer of one of the papers—he was tried for a libel before Sir Philip Flogg'em, at the Old Bailey—two of the jury died that ſeſſions of the diſtemper—Dr Drybones recommended vinegar by way of prevention—the Doctor wore the ſtrangeſt black wigs!—they were made by Ben Block'em, of Bow-Street—I dined with him once, when he was churchwarden, upon two baſtard children—we had a haunch of veniſon—the veniſon was over-roaſted, and ſtunk—but Dr Dewlap twiſted down ſuch gobs of fat——

Mrs Air. But what is all this to the purpoſe?

Air. I was going to tell you, if you would but liſten a bit!

Mrs Air. What did Type ſay?

Air. That he never knew any good come of that kind of——

Mrs Air. Then Type was a fool! don't we ſee by the news, that there is no other way of making matches in London?

Air. Well, well—you know beſt, to be ſure.

Mrs Air. Here the advertiſement is; I have penned it myſelf.

Air. You penned it? Damn me, if ſhe can ſpell a ſingle ſyllable of the language!

Mrs Air. Call the boy in; and obſerve, Mr Aircaſtle, if he correſponds with the marks.

Air. Toby! [*Calling.*

Enter Toby.

Lord, Mrs Aircaſtle, how you have altered the boy! why, his face is as long as a fiddleſtick! and then he has a bundle at his back, as big as a child!

Mrs Air. Pray, Mr Aircaſtle, mind your own buſineſs, I beg!

I beg! would you have him dreſſed like yourſelf, in a ſuit of cloaths made thirty years ago, when you were ſheriff for the county?—Toby, ſtand forth! "Wanted, for a "young gentleman of an ancient family, and agreeable "perſon."—Toby, hold up your head!

Toby. I does, mother, I does.

Air. It is impoſſible, my dear, the boy ſhould ever walk in that manner; why, he will run againſt every body he meets. Toby, do you think you can ſtep without ſtumbling?

Toby. Not in the ſtreets; but crofs a room pretty well, I believe.

Mrs Air. Mr Aircaſtle, have you no idea of grace? Shoulders back, Toby; and cheſt a little more out!

Air. Now, child, look at his elbows! you have pinioned him down like a pickpocket.

Mrs Air. Grace, Mr Aircaſtle, grace.

Air. Grace! he has neither grace, nor greaſe; his breaſt-bone ſticks out like a turkey's.

Mrs Air. Nothing but grace! I wiſh you would read ſome late Poſthumous Letters; you would then know the true value of grace: Do you know that the only way for a young man to thrive in the world, is to get a large diſh of hypocriſy, well garniſhed with grace, an agreeable perſon, and a clear patrimonial eſtate?—"A wife with a very "large portion: if the fortune anſwers, proper allowance "will be made for perſon and mind. The party, and his "rent-roll, may be ſeen at the Lamb in Long-Acre, every "hour of the day."

Air. Why, this will bring the whole town to the houſe.

Mrs Air. That is juſt what I intend; the more bidders, the better.

Enter Tom *and* Flaw.

Tom. Mr Flaw. [*Exit.*

Flaw. Good folks, you are welcome to London!

Air. Ay, here we are, Mr Flaw; here's Toby too.

Toby. Yes, here I am, Mr Flaw.

Flaw. Bleſs me! what a change! I ſhould ſcarce have known him.

Toby. Yes, I ſuppoſe I am pretty much altered, being garniſhed with grace.

Air.

Air. Ay; a grace, I believe, that will tempt nobody to taſte of the diſh.

Mrs Air. Never mind him, Mr Flaw; he is a deſponding creature, you know. But, as a proof that we have not been idle, here is the firſt fruits of my labour.

Flaw. What is it?

Mrs Air. An advertiſement to procure a partner for Toby.

Flaw. A partner?

Mrs Air. Ay, a wife, with a ſuitable fortune.

Flaw. I hope it is not ſent to the papers.

Toby. What, the notice where I am to be ſeen? here it is in my hand.

Mrs Air. Give it me; and go you out, and wait till you are wanted: and don't liſten! d'ye hear? And, Toby, be mindful of grace! and, d'ye hear? don't laugh! you may grin, indeed, to ſhew your teeth, and your manners.

Toby. Will that do?

Mrs Air. Pretty well, for the firſt time. [*Exit* Toby.

Flaw. Bleſs me, Madam! how could ſuch a thought—

Mrs Air. Don't we every day ſee ſuch things in the news?

Flaw. Ay, from an old maid in deſpair, a broken milliner, or a tottering tobacconiſt.

Air. I told her ſo, Mr Flaw: Zounds, ſays I, you treat the boy as if he was a white bear, or an oſtrich—though it is quite a miſtake, Mr Flaw, that thoſe creatures eat iron: I ſaw one once at the Checquer at Saliſbury—the keeper's name was Evan Thomas, a Welſhman—he had but one hand—he loſt the other, endeavouring to ſteal a piece of cheeſe out of a rat-trap—the trap went down, and——

Mrs Air. Did ever mortal ſee ſuch a man?

Air. And, zounds, why muſt not I ſpeak? ſhe likes to liſten to no ſounds but her own; but I will be heard, and—

Mrs Air. And ſo you ſhall, when you talk to the purpoſe.

Air. Purpoſe, Madam? Damn it, I would have you to know——

Flaw. Oh, fy, fy, good people! curb your cholers a little: conſider you are not now in the country.

Air. Well, well, I am calm.

Flaw. Then, to return to our buſineſs: Beſides, my good

good Madam, I had provided a match that would have completed all our matters at once.

Mrs Air. How?

Flaw. A lady, an acquaintance of mine, lately arrived with her niece from the Indies——

Mrs Air. And rich?

Flaw. Enough to purchaſe the ſceptre of Poland.

Air. How!

Flaw. Ay, even before his very good neighbours had brought that monarchy down to a manor.

Air. And pray, as to the party?

Flaw. Fleece'em is the name of the aunt; not much indebted to fortune; but whoever is happy enough to marry the niece, won't ſcruple, I dare ſay, to procure her a proper proviſion.

Mrs Air. The moſt reaſonable thing in the world.

Flaw. I ventured to promiſe as much.

Mrs Air. Then you have hinted the buſineſs?

Flaw. As good as concluded. As marriage-bonds are illegal, it will be right to make a depoſit before the ſolemnization.

Mrs Air. To be ſure. Now, Mr Aircaſtle, I hope I was right; for ſeeing a little caſh might promote our deſigns, I got him to ſell Sycamore-farm, and we have brought the money to town.

Flaw. How much might the—

Mrs Air. Five thouſand.

Flaw. But, with a few diamonds, for which I will get you credit—

Mrs Air. By all means.—When ſhould we wait on the young lady?

Flaw. This very morning; we cannot be too quick; ſome of the young blades about town begin to have an inkling, I fear; I obſerve them throw their eyes up to the windows.

Mrs Air. Without doubt. Mr Aircaſtle, you will go out to the ſhops, and provide Toby with a new Beckford-hat and a couteau du chaſſe?

Flaw. And purchaſe at the ſame time ſome preſents for the young lady.

Mrs Air. The firſt time?

Flaw. Always the rule in the eaſt; you never approach a ſuperior without a ſuitable preſent.

Mrs Air.

Mrs Air. No?

Air. No? why, fool, that is the way the Nabobs have got all their wealth—I knew one of them once; and, if he had not been ſo rich, really a good ſort of a—he was inoculated for the ſmall-pox, by one of the Suttons, at the great houſe by Hyde Park—the builder of it got into the Bench, and was afterwards cleared by an act of inſolvency—though Tom Jenkins, one of his creditors—

Mrs Air. You ſee!—Lord bleſs me now, Mr Aircaſtle, how can you, when we have not a moment to loſe—Go, go out with the boy, I beſeech you!

Air. Well, well, well! [*Going.*

Flaw. I'll run before, and prepare Mrs Fleece'em.

Mrs Air. By all manner of means.

Air. Pray, is not the toy-ſhop at the end of the ſtreet, kept by the ſon of—I remember I met the father once at Newmarket—he was in a one-horſe chaiſe, made by Varniſh here in Long Acre—who built a ſtate-coach for the Empreſs of Ruſſia—he was recommended by Lord—I can't think of his name—who was choſen one of the ſixteen for the kingdom of—

Mrs Air. Take him with you dear Mr Flaw!

Flaw. Come, Sir, I will ſhew you the ſhop.

[*Exeunt* Aircaſtle *and* Flaw.

Mrs Air. So! having provided for Toby, I am at leiſure to attend to my own private concerns. Who's there?

Enter Maid-Servant.

Bid the waiter come up! [*Exit Maid.*] If Colonel Gorget anſwers my letter in the way I expect, it will prove a pretty good beginning: the Colonel, I make no doubt, knows the ways of the world, and will ſoon take the hint: he was vaſtly ſtruck with me during the races; and I don't ſee why I have not as good a right to profit by my perſon, as I am told ſome ladies do, who live in this—

Enter Waiter.

Well, Sir, what return to my letter?

Wait. The Colonel, Madam, will obey your commands.

Mrs Air. Very well! when he comes, ſhew him into the next room. [*Exeunt.*

Another

Another room in the Bagnio.

Enter Colonel Gorget, *reading a letter.*

Gorg. Bravo, bravo, my ſweet country acquaintance, this is a rendezvous, with a witneſs. Let me ſee! um! um, um! "Unexpectedly brought by buſineſs to town "—no time to make a proper proviſion—accommodate "me with five hundred guineas"—accommodate, an apt phraſe, and a pretty ſum too; but how the deuce could the woman ſuppoſe that I was able to advance ſuch a ſum? um, um!—"Not prove ungrateful—Elizabeth"—Oh, ho! now I begin to conceive.—Stay! who have we here? zooks! the huſband himſelf.

Enter Aircaſtle.

Air. What, Colonel Gorget!

Gorg. Mr Aircaſtle, I am happy to ſee you! but what important buſineſs can have brought you to London?

Air. Some family affairs, and to lay out a pretty large ſum, which I lately got for a parcel of land.—But is this viſit intended to me?

Gorg. No; I was quite a ſtranger to your being in town. A lady in the houſe, that I lately knew in the country—

Air. What, from our part of the world?

Gorg. No, no; but a deviliſh fine woman: laſt ſummer ſome little gallantries paſt between us below.

Air. Ay, ay; you officers play the very deuce when you come down into the country. I remember Enſign Saſh, about ten years ago—his father came from Barbadoes—I met him at Treacle's, the great ſugar baker's, who had a houſe in St Mary-Axe—he took the leaſe from Alderman Gingham, who ſerved the ſheriff with deputy—there was tight work on the huſtings—

Gorg. Oh, the devil! he runs on at the old rate.—But we forget the lady.

Air. Oh, ay; "gallantry with her below;" which I ſuppoſe you have finiſhed above.

Gorg. No, faith, not entirely, my friend; but I think we are in a fair way.

Air. Ay?

Gorg. The garriſon has offered to ſurrender.

Air. Then what prevented you from taking poſſeſſion?

Gorg. The governor, as uſual, inſiſts on a bribe, which it was not immediately in my power to pay—

Air. Damn thoſe governors;—why, there was the governor of Bergen-op-zoom, in the laſt war—

Gorg. But hear me!—I was juſt ſtepping home to provide the credentials; but, however, this lucky meeting will, I flatter myſelf, put an end to my journey.

Air. As how?

Gorg. If you will ſupply me with the ſum till evening, I ſhall cloſe the bargain without quitting the houſe.

Air. How much?

Gorg. Five hundred guineas.

Air. Five hundred guineas? what a cormorant the woman muſt be!

Gorg. Not at all, when her huſband is rich, and ſhe is above accepting a trifle.

Air. Now, I ſhould have thought that would have made her more reaſonable.

Gorg. Quite the reverſe; why, did you ever know a wealthy courtier accept of a moderate penſion?

Air. That, indeed—but are you really ſerious?

Gorg. So ſerious, that if you will lend me the money—

Air. Nay, but, Colonel, that is—

Gorg. Nay, but if you heſitate—

Air. No, it is not that; the money is quite at your ſervice; but you will repent and then reproach me—what! five hundred? there can be no woman worth it.

Gorg. You would alter your tone, if you ſaw her.

Air. Should I? prithee tell me her name; perhaps I may know her.

Gorg. I durſt not; you know my honour is concerned.

Air. Honour with ſuch a woman as that?

Gorg. She is very well known.

Air. And ought to be better.

Gorg. But I waſte time, and may loſe the critical minute: will you ſupply me, or muſt I—

Air. With the greateſt pleaſure in life: here is in this bag the very ſum, which I have juſt received for a draught in the city.

Gorg. Ten thouſand thanks, my dear Mr—

Air. I can't ſay tho', but I am ſorry—

Gorg. Oh, it is not impoſſible but I may come off at an eaſier

eaſier rate: with ſuch a capital in hand, one may haggle, you know.

Air. True, true; I'd endeavour to get her for nothing: chouſe her, chouſe her! do, Colonel. If indeed ſhe had aſked for a ring with a poſey, or any ſuch trifle as that—but ſuch a monſtrous demand! I would give ſomething to ſee her.

Gorg. Why, it is my opinion you know who ſhe is.

Air. Really?

Gorg. Now if it ſhould turn out that you had been happy with the lady yourſelf, would not that greatly ſurprize you?

Air. Me? ha, ha, ha! the deuce a bit: tho', when I came firſt to the Temple, there was a lawyer's wife that lived in Quality-court, that I was exceedingly fond of—her huſband came home one night, and I crept under the bed, where I ſhould have remained concealed, but for a little dog of Charles's breed; he went *Bow, wow, wow*—

Gorg. Oh, the devil!—but conſider time preſſes; I muſt away to the lady.

Air. True, true; and I to the ſhops with my boy.—And I happy with the—ha, ha, ha—However, if that be the caſe, Colonel, it is a ſtronger reaſon for cloſing your purſe ſtrings; for the devil take me if I ever knew a woman who was deſerving a tythe of that ſum in my life!—Yes; I lie! I did; a Greek girl, they called Circaſſian—I ſaw her at Tunbridge—where, by, the bye, they have the oddeſt pantile walk—with the muſic on a ſhelf—and as the company walk to and fro, the fidlers go *Tal, lal, la*—

Gorg. Nay, but—[*puſhing him out.*] This is lucky beyond expectation; what a civilized huſband, to ſupply me with the very money I wanted!

Enter Tom.

Is the lady at leiſure?

Tom. She knows her huſband is gone out, and will be with you this inſtant.

Gorg. Very well! take care, and watch his return.

Tom. Here ſhe is. [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs Aircaſtle.

Mrs Air. What, you are come, my dear Colonel! I have waited for you with the utmoſt impatience.

Gorg.

Gorg. And I, Madam, have flown to obey your commands.

Mrs Air. No more of that, Colonel, I beg: I bluſh to conſider—

Gorg. Bluſh! and why ſo, Madam?

Mrs Air. At what you muſt think of my letter: but the high ſenſe I entertain of your friendſhip induced me, in ſuch an exigence, to make the trial.

Gorg. And the wiſeſt ſtep you could take.

Mrs Air. Pardon me, Sir! I am not to learn how dangerous it is to have an obligation to you.

Gorg. And why ſo? can there be any thing more natural than to deſire the aſſiſtance of the perſon who loves us? of my attachment I hope you have no reaſon to doubt.

Mrs Air. That, Sir, is the very ſource of my ſorrow, and has determined me to ſupport every evil; nay, to apply even to Mr Aircaſtle himſelf, rather than—

Gorg How, Madam? then it is plain I have loſt your eſteem. Fool that I was, to be lulled by the bewitching lines of your letter! I thought that I had detected love, that ſly lurcher, lurking under the maſk of confidential—but now I unfortunately find how far I am from your favour.

Mrs Air. Cruel, unjuſt Colonel Gorget!

Gorg. Ha! am I unjuſt? you revive me! you reſtore me to—But baniſh every thought of an obligation to any but me; I ſhould be jealous of—

Mrs Air. But really, Colonel, the ſum is—

Gorg. Of no importance at all; a mere trifle; juſt nothing: I ſhall not feel it, believe me.

Mrs Air. How can I be too grateful for ſuch a generous proof of your friendſhip? ſure you were born to—

Enter Toby.

What the deuce has brought that booby back! [*Aſide.*

Toby. Father deſires you would call in your way, and take him up at the ſword-cutler's.

Gorg. How! the young cub? this is lucky beyond expectation!—Here, Madam, are the five hundred guineas, which you will be kind enough to pay, with my thanks, to Mr Aircaſtle, your huſband.

Mrs Air. Finely taken and turned; what infinite wit and

and contrivance! [*Aſide.*]—But would it not be right, Colonel, juſt to ſign a receipt?

Gorg. Unneceſſary, Madam; but juſt as you pleaſe.

Mrs Air. There is pen and ink in the room over head.

Gorg. Give me leave to conduct you.

[*Exeunt* Gorget *and* Mrs Aircaſtle.

Toby. I don't underſtand what father and mother's about. Here am I dizened, and ſkewered, and graced, juſt like a young colt that is a-breaking: nay, they were going to advertiſe me too, as if I was really a horſe; but lawyer Flaw has made them alter their minds, and I am to be diſpoſed of by private contract, I think. I can't ſay that I am over fond of their ways. Oh, poor Betſy Bloſſom! let them match me to whoever they will, I ſhall never love any like thee: I believe I ſhould have put an end to their project, if I could but have found.—hey! who is this? mercy on me! ſure it muſt be her ghoſt! and yet that can't be; becauſe ghoſts, they ſay, never comes but at night. Betſy?

Enter Betſy Bloſſom.

Betſy. Maſter Toby?

Toby. But is it poſſible? can it be you?

Betſy. As you ſee.

Toby. Well, and how? Lord, I have ten thouſand queſtions to aſk you. Where haſt been? how doſt do? how comeſt here? why, you are vaſt fine, Betſy, all of a ſudden; you be not married!

Betſy. Married! no, no; you have put that out of my power, you know.

Toby. Me? how ſo, Mrs Betty?

Betſy. Is that a queſtion now to be aſked? have you ſo ſoon forgot what has happened between us?

Toby. No, no; I remember ſome part pretty well, I believe: but you cannot come for to go for to ſay, that we ever went to church together, in that there way you mean.

Betſy. That ceremony, Mr Toby, you know well, was all that was wanting—

Toby. Beſides, it could not be, Mrs Betſy; becauſe why, as father ſays, ſince the parliament houſe interfered, it is againſt the law to marry for love.

Betſy How! what, are all your vows, oaths, promiſes, forgot?

forgot? does not this ſixpence, broken between us, when we laſt met in the grove, ſtare you full in the face?

Toby. Yes; I have t'other half in my pocket.

Betſy. Does not your conſcience, Mr Toby, upbraid you? but men are all traitors alike! their whole ſtudy is to delude poor innocent maids. Oh! why did I truſt that fair face and flattering tongue, and not ſuſpect the wily ſerpent that was lurking beneath?

Toby. Nay, Betſy—

Betſy. But my prayers are granted, however; my only wiſh was to ſee you once more—

Toby. My ſweet, dear, little Betſy—

Betſy. Once more to ſurvey that ſweet form; the buſineſs of life is now over! eyes, take your laſt look! open, thou cold earth, to receive me—

Toby. Lord have mercy! if you don't frighten me out of my wits.

Betſy. To thy dreary manſion I come! there my ſorrows will ceaſe, and my ſhame, and name, be forgot by the unpitying—Oh! [*Faints.*

Toby. Stop, ſtop, deareſt Betſy, and take me along with you; murder, fire, water! Waiter! what, will nobody come to aſſiſt her?

Enter Tom.

Tom. Bleſs me, Sir! what can be the matter?

Toby. Why, here is a poor young creature at her laſt gaſp: clap her hand, and bend her forward a bit!

Tom. Miſs Betſy? mercy on us! how came this about? it is only a fit; ſhe revives, her eyes begin to open a little.

Betſy. Where am I?

Toby. In the fore-room, up one pair of ſtairs.

Tom. Bleſs me, Sir, what can be the occaſion of this?

Toby. Why, it is a young woman that is breaking her heart.

Tom. Her heart? and for what?

Toby. Why, for love of me, to be ſure.

Tom. And can you be ſuch a barbarian? why, you muſt have the heart of a tiger, to ſtand unſhocked at ſuch a horrible ſcene.

Toby. Nay, I have been ſhocked enough, if that is all.

Tom. Then why don't you remove her diſtreſs?

Toby. Why, ſhe wants me to marry her.

Tom.

Tom. And is that all ſhe aſks; and can you heſitate for ſuch a trifle as that?

Toby. Why, how can I, when father and mother have promiſed me to an Indian woman, as rich as a Jew, from beyond ſea?

Betſy. How? and have I a rival? perjured monſter! but think not my death ſhall finally cloſe our account; my ſhade, like Margaret's grimly ghoſt, ſhall purſue thee, haunt thee in dreams at midnight, ſhake thy curtains round thy guilty head, and holloa in thine ear!

Bethink thee, Toby, of thy fault,
Thy pledge and broken oath;
And give me back my maiden vow,
And give me back my troth.

Toby. Take it with you, Mrs Betty, whenever you pleaſe.

Betſy. [*Sings.*] For this I'll haunt thy midnight dreams,
And hover round thy bed;
Thy ears I'll fill with horrid ſcreams,
Nor leave thee till thou'rt dead.

Toby. Why, you won't go to be ſo cruel, I hope! what, is there no amends to be made?

Tom. So, Sir, you ſee, dead or alive, ſhe is determined to plague you.

Toby. Yes, yes; I ſee it well enough. Lord, who would have thought it? ſhe is mightily changed ſince her coming to London.

Tom. This town is apt to open the mind.

Toby. Is it? I hope it will ſhut again, though, when ſhe gets into the country. But pray, Mr What-d'ye-call-em, by what chance did Betſy come here?

Tom. My miſtreſs took her in, out of compaſſion: It is wonderful how charitable a lady ſhe is! why, we have five or ſix more young women here in the ſame ſituation.

Toby. Indeed? ſhe muſt be the moſt goodeſt woman on earth: well, if ſhe don't go to heaven, what chance has ſuch a poor creature as I?

Tom. None at all, unleſs you repair the wrongs ſhe has ſuffered.

Toby. But if I was minded to comply with her wiſh, I don't ſee how I could bring it about?

Tom. You are one-and-twenty, no doubt?

Toby.

Toby. Theſe three years and above.

Tom. And Miſs?

Toby. Within a twelvemonth of me.

Tom. Oh, then I will manage matters, I warrant.—Where are you going?

Toby. To call on father, at a ſhop near the old black man a-horſeback; the wind has blown his hat from his head.

Tom. Very well! give them the ſlip as ſoon as you can; run back here; you will find us—

Betſy. What, is he a-going? oh!

Toby. Nay, Betſy, be quiet! ben't I ready to do all that you want! if you faint any more, I wiſh I may die if I'll have you.

Betſy. Won't you?

Toby. No.

Tom. Courage, Miſs! keep up your—

Toby. Right, Mr —— or, if ſhe muſt faint, can't ſhe wait a little till I get out of the houſe? [*Exit.*

Tom. He is off: finely managed! do not ſtir from hence: I will run to the Commons, and be back again in a—one kiſs, as a reward for the part I have—

Enter Toby.

Toby. I forgot to aſk, Sir, where I ſhould—

Tom. Run! here, Sir! ſhe is fainting again!

Toby. Is ſhe? then call ſomebody elſe, for I will make the beſt of my way— [*Exit.*

Tom and Betſy. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Enter Mrs Fleece'em *and* Prig.

Mrs Fl. IT is lucky the Doctor is at home [*aſide*]. John, you may take the ſilks of Mr Prig, and put them into the coach.—How could I be ſo giddy to forget my purſe, and leave it on the table? all my ſervants are honeſt, I hope.

Prig. No doubt; it would be the greateſteſt of crimes, to injure a lady of your affability and aimiability.

Mrs Fl.

Mrs Fl. Quite polite, I proteſt, Mr Prig! I am ſorry, however, Sir, to have given you all this trouble.

Prig. I conſider it, Madam, as one of the moſt greateſteſt pieces of happineſs that could have befallen Paul Prig. Your La'ſhip is a perfect pattern of humility: To ſuffer a ſimple tradeſman like me to occupy part of your La'ſhip's coach, is ſuch an honour that—

Mrs Fl. Honour? by no means, Mr Prig: I don't know a ſtation more uſeful, or indeed more reputable, than that of a citizen like you, who condeſcends to employ his genius in adorning his fellow creatures. The ladies, indeed, are moſt obliged to your labours.

Prig. Were all ladies like you, Madam, my condition would be celeſtial indeed; for, as Maſter Shakſpur ſays,

"The labour we delight in phyſics pain."

Mrs Fl. Mr Prig, I proteſt you ſurpriſe me! who could have expected ſo much gallantry from the ward of Farringdon-Within?

Prig. Your charms, Madam, would animate even a native of Hockley in the Hole!

Mrs Fl. Fy, Mr ——

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My maſter begs you would ſtep into his ſtudy. [*Exit.*

Mrs Fl. Mr Prig, you will excuſe me a moment: It is lucky my lawyer is at home; I ſhall take the money, and not give you the trouble to go ſo far as my houſe. I ſhall ſoon call again at your ſhop. [*Exit.*

Prig. The greateſt pleaſure, Madam, that I could ever have.—Ha, ha! left her purſe on the table? a likely ſtory, indeed! no, no; I underſtand her ogles and leers; her eyes ſpoke more truth than her tongue. I don't recollect to have ſeen her before; but ſhe has ſeen me, that is clear, from the ſtrength of her paſſion. "Soon call at your ſhop?" and how ſoft the tone of her voice! yes, yes; I believe you will. Well, well, you ſha'n't be diſappointed, my dear; his worſt enemies can't accuſe Paul Prig of being cruel.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. You had better ſtep into this room; there is a fire.

Prig. By all means. " A ſtation more uſeful, or more reputable, than that of a"—poor creter! ſhe muſt be very far gone indeed. [*Exeunt.*

Another Room.

Doctor Hellebore *and* Mrs Fleece'em *diſcovered.*

Helle. To whoſe recommendation, Madam, do I owe the honour—

Mrs Fl. The world's, Doctor; your great reputation.

Helle. Oh, Madam!

Mrs Fl. But, as I was obſerving to you, Sir, if it was not for theſe unaccountable whims in my uncle, no man in England has a finer underſtanding, or a clearer conception: nothing irregular in his conduct; diſcharges all the ſocial duties with the utmoſt exactneſs; reaſons with the moſt perfect preciſion upon every ſubject.

Helle. And the ſtate of his bodily health!

Mrs Fl. He does not complain.

Helle. And theſe diſtractions are frequent?

Mrs Fl. I think more ſo, of late.

Helle. Ay, the great tenſion of the pia-mater muſt enfeeble the ſyſtem; and the paroxiſms, of courſe, oftener repeated, and of longer continuance. And his whims you ſay—

Mrs Fl. To the laſt degree extravagant: Laſt week he ſuppoſed himſelf a young neſtling crow, and conſtantly opened his mouth, like a bill, and cawed for food, when he found himſelf hungry.

Helle. A manifeſt mark of diſtraction!

Mrs Fl. His whim of to-day is peculiar enough.

Helle. Of what kind?

Mrs Fl. He ſuppoſes himſelf a mercer upon Ludgate-Hill.

Helle. A mercer?

Mrs Fl. And that he has ſold me a parcel of ſilks, for the payment of which I have conducted him hither.

Helle. Why, Madam, we do now and then meet with extraordinary inſtances: but could not I ſee your uncle?

Mrs Fl. I brought him hither on purpoſe.

Helle. [*calling.*] Deſire the gentleman below to walk up. Why, Madam, the goodneſs of his health we look upon as a bad ſymptom, in theſe kind of caſes; when they ariſe from a fever, why—

Mrs Fl.

Mrs Fl. I hope there will be no occaſion for violent remedies, ſuch as correction, or ſtrait waiſtcoats?

Helle. Not if he is tractable.

Mrs Fl. But if that ſhould not be the caſe, Sir?

Helle. The beſt way, Ma'am, is to leave him to my care a little; I have a convenient houſe not far from town, where mad people are managed with greater advantage.

Mrs Fl. I ſhall ſubmit his treatment entirely to you.—But I ſuppoſe, Sir, it will be right for me to withdraw, as you may have ſome queſtions to aſk him, improper for the ear of a lady. I will pay a ſhort viſit, now I am in this part of the town.

Helle. As you pleaſe, Madam.—A diſcreet perſon! this does not ſeem to be a family complaint. [*Aſide.*

Mrs Fl. Here he is. I muſt humour him a little.

Enter Prig.

This gentleman, Sir, will ſettle our little affair. Depend upon it, I ſhall be with you ſoon. [*Exit.*

Prig. I ſhall wait for that honour with the greateſt impatience.—She is a fine creter!

Helle. Come, Sir, take a chair.

Prig. Sir, there is no occaſion.

Helle. You had better, as I ſhall have a good many queſtions to aſk you.—[*They ſit.*] Well, Sir, and how do you find yourſelf?

Prig. Sir, you are very obliging! I am, I thank you, in very good health.

Helle. Don't you feel yourſelf at times inclined to be feveriſh?

Prig. Feveriſh! not I, Sir.

Helle. And have you had no material complaints, for any time back?

Prig. Not that I recollect; a ſlight touch of the influenza, indeed; but fared full as well as my neighbours.

Helle. And your appetite?

Prig. As uſual; but I am at no time an over-great eater.

Helle. So much the better: Favour me with your hand if you pleaſe.

Prig. Sir! [*Riſes and offers his hand.*

Helle. Keep your ſeat, if you pleaſe.—[*Feels his pulſe.*] Rather

Rather a little too lively! And as to your ſleep now, is it continued or broken?

Prig. Sir!

Helle. Are your ſlumbers without interruption? have you no ſtarts?

Prig. Not that I know of; indeed, I never was over-fond of my bed.

Helle. Ay, reſtleſs; I thought ſo.

Prig. Indeed, my buſineſs requires that I ſhould be an early riſer; when an apprentice, I was always the firſt in the ſhop.

Helle. An apprentice! poor man! but, however, I ſee no violent ſymptoms at preſent; a preparatory medicine, till we can put him into a regimen. Be ſeated! I will fetch you a draught that will immediately ſettle the buſineſs. [*Exit.*

Prig. A draught!—A draught on his banker, I reckon: why could not he have given it me at firſt? An odd man! what the deuce has my health to do with my bill? Let us ſee; what is the tote? a hundred and ninety-two pounds ſix, and—oh! here he is, I ſuppoſe, with the check.

Enter Hellebore, *with a bottle and phial.*

Helle. You will take this draught three times a-day, at two hours diſtance, firſt ſhaking it well.

Prig. Sir?

Helle. And nine drops of this, in a glaſs of water, firſt going to bed; it will ſerve to compoſe—

Prig. Compoſe? here muſt be ſome miſtake in this matter! I fancy, Sir, you take me for ſomebody elſe—my name, Sir, is Prig; I keep the great mercer's ſhop, as you go up Ludgate—

Helle. Hum! very well, Sir.

Prig. And am come with the lady below, to be paid this here bill in my hand.

Helle. Oh, Sir, I am no ſtranger to the whole of that ſtory: but how could you now—for, as you are cool at preſent, I will reaſon the matter a little—how could a man of your rank and fortune indulge ſuch an improbable whim?—I ſay a mercer indeed!

Prig. And pray, good Sir, who d'ye take me to be?

Helle. Oh, Sir, I know very well; your niece has fully informed me.

Prig.

Prig. My niece? I have no niece; at leaſt, not in London, I am ſure.

Helle. No? what d'ye think of the lady who conducted you hither?

Prig. She my niece? Damn me, Sir, till this morning, if ever I ſet eyes on her! Sure—

Helle. Oh, ho! what, you are beginning to be violent: you had better be quiet, or I ſhall find a method to tame you.

Prig. Tame me, Sir? I don't underſtand what you would be at! Will you pay me my bill here, or not?

Helle. Your bill? poor creature!

Prig. Poor creter, Sir? none of your poor creters to me! follow your client's directions, and diſcharge me at once.

Helle. My client?

Prig. Ay, Sir. When money is in the caſe, a man may as well have to do with Old Nick, as a lawyer; there is no getting it out of their hands.

Helle. Oh, he takes me for a lawyer. The paroxiſm is exceedingly ſtrong. Who is there? order a coach, and let the three keepers convey him to Chelſea.

Enter Three Keepers.

Prig. Me to Chelſea? let any body touch me that dare!

Helle. Ay, ay, we will ſee that.

Prig. This is ſome conſpiracy, I ſuppoſe, to bam, to chouſe me out of my money.

Helle. You will take him to Chelſea.

Prig. Hands off!

Helle. And, as you ſee he is violent, let him have the back room, with the barr'd windows, up two pair of ſtairs.

Prig. Me to Chelſea? me barr'd windows, and back room two pair of ſtairs?

Helle. If the fit ſhould encreaſe, put on the ſtrait waiſtcoat. I ſhall call myſelf in the evening.

Prig. Let me go, gentlemen! this is a damn'd contrivance, to rob me! Unhand me, or you ſhall be all ſwing'd and ſous'd! impriſon a citizen, that only comes for his money? Damn me, Jack Wilkes's affair will be but a flea-bite to this! [*Keepers hurry him off.*

Helle. If this is the caſe, on with the waiſtcoat. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

Enter Fleece'em *and* Flaw.

Flaw. Ha, ha, ha! poor Prig! in what a piteous plight have you left him!—But the Aircaſtles will all be here immediately, ſo take care we are not interrupted.

Mrs Fl. As they are ſo exceedingly credulous, the buſineſs will ſoon be diſpatched.

Flaw. In a trice. I have ſtipulated that your proviſion ſhall be ſecured before the ſolemnization.

Mrs Fl. Right, right; perfectly right.

Flaw But have you properly prepared the girl for the purpoſe?

Mrs Fl. Her part will be eaſy.

Flaw. True; but ſhe ſhould be adroit; as events may ariſe, that will require ſome little ſkill: who the deuce have you got?

Mrs Fl Why, I conſidered that as a very tickliſh point; it would be dangerous to truſt, and difficult to find in this town a ſuitable ſubject: don't you think that the black girl I brought with me from Boſton—

Flaw. The negro? zounds, her complexion will betray her at once!

Mrs Fl. I have thought of an expedient to ſecure us from that.

Flaw. It is true, theſe people have no great penetration; but what we do—

Mrs Fl. Muſt quickly be done: I will juſt ſpeak to the girl. [*Calls.*] Marianne!

Enter Marianne.

Mar. What you want, Miſſy?

Mrs Fl. Go in and throw yourſelf on the bed; and, do you hear? let the window be ſhut, and the curtains drawn exceedingly cloſe.

Mar. Yes, Miſſy.

Mrs Fl. And whoever ſpeaks to you, don't you chatter and talk, but ſigh now and then, as if you were ſick: you will be only aſked a queſtion or two; as, if you are ill? or are better? to which you need ſay nothing but Yes.

Mar. Nothing but iſs. I take care, Miſſy, never you fear.

Mrs Fl.

Mrs Fl And, Marianne, no candle!

Mar. No, no, Miſſy. [*Exit.*

Mrs Fl. Oh, ſhe will anſwer our purpoſe, I warrant: beſides, unleſs they are very preſſing to ſee her, there will be no occaſion to produce her at all.

Flaw. But, I beg your pardon, there will: by my directions, the ſon is provided with preſents, with a view to propitiate his Venus.

Mrs Fl. [*rap at the door.*] There they are! Mr Flaw, you will receive them? It will be right for me to retire, to ſee if all things within are in order. [*Exit.*

Enter Aircaſtle, Mrs Aircaſtle, *and* Toby.

Air. I tell you the boy is an abſolute ſight, and I ſhould not wonder if the young lady was to—

Mrs Air. You wonder? and pray who made you a judge of the proper—

Flaw. Huſh, huſh! for heaven's ſake, huſh! conſider where you are!

Air. She is at her old tricks, Mr Flaw; there is no—

Flaw. A key lower, good Sir, if you pleaſe! you will frighten the family.

Air. By her good will, I ſhould never open my mouth, but to eat.

Mrs Air. I know but little elſe that it's good for.

Flaw. Nay, Madam, now you are as faulty as he.—Only think what a ſtrange impreſſion this will make on the ladies within! I beg you will ſuſpend your warfare a while.

Mrs Air. Well, well!

Flaw. And no contradiction, I beg; but be attentive and polite to each other, as people of faſhion ſhould be: you may renew hoſtilities, and make up for loſt time, as ſoon as you are out of the houſe.

Mrs Air. Why, how is it my fault, Mr Flaw?

Air. Nor ſhall it be mine: for man and wife to quarrel before folks is rather rudiſh, I own; by ourſelves, indeed, it is a pretty innocent amuſement enough—Tom Teſty, of our town, uſed to ſay—his wife was a Devonſhire girl; if I am not miſtaken from Plymouth—where, by the bye, they have the beſt John Dories in England—Old Quin, one ſummer, went thither on purpoſe—

Flaw. And if, Mr Aircaſtle, you would contract your converſation

converſation a little—To be ſure, your manner is pleaſing, and your matter full of inſtruction; but as we meet upon buſineſs—

Air. I believe you are right, Mr Flaw. Come, my love; let us ſhow him how polite we can be, if we pleaſe.—Dear, Mrs Aircaſtle, how I admire your taſte! theſe here ſkirts of the boy's are ſo light and genteel, and ſo airy—

Mrs Air. True; I am happy, my dear, that I have your approbation: thoſe we got made in the country, trapes and dangle like a parcel of petticoats.

Air. Right, my love.—For all the world, like a Hounſlow poſt-boy! his whole figure is juſt like a ſpider, nothing but legs; a mere couple of ſtilts!—and then that top to his wig, my dear child—

Mrs Air. Gives a faſhionable turn to his face; and then adds to the height.

Air. It has indeed, my ſoul, a prodigious happy effect.—A block, popping out of a hair-cutter's window, up two pair of ſtairs in the Strand.—And then that bunch at his back—

Flaw. Huſh! here comes the lady.

Enter Mrs Fleece'em.

This, Madam, is the family for whom I told you I had ſo warm an affection; and this the young gentleman whoſe alliance I recommend for Miſs.

Mrs Air. Grace, Toby!

Mrs Fl. I make no doubt, Madam, but my niece will think herſelf happy in an union with ſo accompliſhed a perſon.

Air. Why, as to that, Toby, Mrs ——— what is the gentlewoman's name?

Flaw. Mrs Fleece'em.

Air. I recollect, Madam, going ſome years ago with one of that name in the ſtage coach to York—we were overturned about a mile beyond Newark—the parſon of the pariſh—he became afterwards a prebend of Worceſter, in the room of old Walter Wench'em, who was caſt in a ſuit of *crim. con.* by Sir Timothy Tallyhoe, remarkable for the beſt pack of hounds in the country—

Mrs Air. For heaven's ſake, Mr Aircaſtle!

Flaw. Have a care! you have forgot.

Air. I am dumb.

Mrs Fl.

Mrs Fl. Pray, Madam, has the young gentleman travelled?

Mrs Air. Who? Toby?

Air. Why, Madam, I did once intend—but Sir Roger Ramble—who I am told will be ſtrongly oppoſed next election, for the borough of Barnſtaple, by Sir Walter Win'em—who during the whole time of Sir Robert Walpole's admin—

Mrs Air. Mr Aircaſtle, I beg pardon, but the lady directed the queſtion to me.

Air. True, my angel; and I am ſure nobody can give a better anſwer than dear Mrs Aircaſtle—

Mrs Air. You are very polite.

Air. But I was willing to ſave you the trouble, my ſoul.

Mrs Air. I ſhall think it no trouble to ſatisfy the lady's enquiries.

Mrs Fl. Nay, it was a matter of curioſity only:—There is, beſides, an elegance, a *je ne ſcai quoi*, in your ſon's air, that is rarely acquired in this country.

Mrs. Air. Did not I tell you the prodigious power of grace!

Air. Yes; but I could never have believed it.

Mrs Air. Pray, Madam, is the young lady at home?

Mrs Fl. Juſt lain down for a little: the change of climate has given her a ſlight indiſpoſition; but a few days, I dare ſay, will reſtore her.

Mrs Air. Miſs, I preſume, has a phyſician?

Air. A what? a phyſician, my life, for a little ſea-ſickneſs? Why, Dr Diet, at Margate, who, by the bye, intends to ſettle in London—his aunt, Major Mortar's widow—who was killed by a bomb at the taking of Goree—Tom Truant, an old ſchoolfellow of mine, was cloſe by his ſide—Tom Tru—

Mrs Air. Dear, Mr Aircaſtle, what has all this to do with the young lady's illneſs?

Air. I was coming to that, my ſoul, if you will let me. I don't know how it happens; in general, nobody is better bred than Mrs Aircaſtle; but to-day ſhe won't let me bring out a word.—So, Madam, Tom Truant, as I was—

Mrs Air. Mr Aircaſtle, I muſt interrupt you!

Air. You muſt?

Mrs Air. I can't ſuffer it, upon this lady's account.

Air. It was for her ſake, my ſoul, I was ſpeaking.—So, Madam, Tom Truant—

Mrs Air. If you perſiſt, I ſhall quit the houſe, I aſſure you!

Air. Quit the houſe?

Mrs Air. This very inſtant!

Air. Zounds, Madam, if you come to that, you may go to the—

Mrs Air. Any where to get rid of your abſurd—

Air. For that matter, you can't be more willing than I.

Mrs Air. Then, Madam, I take my leave.

Air. When you will: this lady and I can eaſily ſettle matters without you.—So, Madam, as I was ſaying Tom Tru—

Flaw. For heaven's ſake, Sir!—Mrs Aircaſtle, be calm!—when things are juſt bringing to bear—

Air. All I meant was for the ſervice of Miſs.

Mrs Fl. Very obliging, indeed. I ſhould be ſorry if any difference ſhould ariſe on my niece's account: beſides, her illneſs is ſo trifling, that the young gentleman may, if he pleaſes, ſtep into her room to enquire after her health.

Mrs Air. Toby will be very happy, I am ſure. You ſee, Madam, what the lad is.

Mrs Fl. A moſt agreeable youth, I muſt own; and then his ſilence is a modeſt mark of his merit.

Air. Do you hear that, Mrs Air—

Mrs Air. Yes; and I hope it will make a proper impreſſion on you.—You doubtleſs, Madam, know the taſte of your niece; may we hope that Toby has any chance of ſucceeding?

Mrs Fl. She was prodigiouſly pleaſed with Mr Flaw's account of his parents; which, indeed, I now find to be true in every reſpect.

Air. and Mrs Air. Oh, Madam!

Mrs Fl And as to fortune, ſhe is totally careleſs in that, her own being much more than ſufficient.

Air. How manly that is in a woman!—I remember Miſs Patty Plumb of Jamaica did the very ſame—they ſay her grandfather was tranſported for robbing a hen-rooſt—

Mrs Air. But as to his figure, Madam; do you apprehend it will ſtrike her? Toby, hold up your head!

Mrs Fl. I can ſee no reaſon againſt it: indeed, the young

young gentleman has rather a fairer complexion than what ſhe has been commonly uſed to; the natives of India, from their climate, have rather a ſallower hue.

Mrs Air. True, Madam.

Mrs Fl. But, if neceſſary, that may be eaſily altered by art; ſome ſaffron, or ſnuff, juſt ſkimmed over his face—

Mrs Air. Quickly!

Air. I have a box of Scotch in my pocket: it may be done in an inſtant.

Mrs Fl. Their hair, too, is moſt commonly dark; but a little German blacking here on each of the eyebrows—

Toby. If a burnt cork will do, I have one in my pocket.

Air. Mr Flaw, will you ring for a candle?

Mrs Fl. There is no neceſſity now: we have been obliged to ſhut out the light, as her eyes are rather tender and weak, with looking ſo long on nothing but water.

Mrs Air. True, Madam. Well, Madam, we will detain you no longer; I am ſure it is impoſſible to ſay how much we are obliged—you may rely upon it, we ſhall ever be grateful.

Mrs Fl. I don't in the leaſt doubt it: Mr Flaw has, I preſume, hinted my ſituation?

Mrs Air. Moſt minutely: Mr Aircaſtle has prepared the depoſit. You have the needful?

Air. All but five hundred pounds, which you may have in the evening: I lent it juſt now to a—the ſtory will make you laugh, I am ſure: As I was going out, colonel—who commanded laſt war—

Mrs Air. Is this a time for a ſtory?

Flaw. Fy, fy! diſpatch, Mr Aircaſtle!

Mrs Air. Here all the bills are.

Flaw. Nay, hold a little, I beg! This, you know, is a kind of compact; there are conditions to be performed on both ſides: therefore the money ſhould, I think, be lodged in neutral hands, till the material point is complied with.

Mrs Air. There is no occaſion.

Mrs Fl. I can have no objection, I am ſure; where then ſhall we place it?

Mrs Air. Mr Flaw is a friend to both parties—

Air. True; the propereſt man in the world.

Mrs Fl. I am not quite ſo certain of that. [*Aſide.*

Air. There, there the bills are, Mr Flaw.

Mrs Air.

Mrs Air. Now we will leave Toby and the lady together.

Air. Toby, don't forget to deliver the preſents.

Toby. I have them here in a box.

Air. Mind your behaviour, my good lad!—I wiſh we had time though to doctor his face: againſt their next meeting I will do it myſelf; I will manage that matter, I warrant: I learnt the art laſt autumn of a parcel of ſtrollers—they had been playing, during the dog-days, with one Foote in this town—a fellow, they ſay, takes people off, and—

Mrs Air. Nay, Mr Aircaſtle, come along, I beſeech you!

Air. Well, well! you are always in ſuch a damnable hurry!

Mrs Fl. Mr Flaw, you are not going, I hope? becauſe I wanted juſt to ſpeak a few words—

Flaw. I ſhall be back in a minute.

[*Exeunt* Flaw, Mr *and* Mrs Aircaſtle.

Mrs Fl. This, Sir, this is the door; tread ſoftly.

Toby. Had not I better pull off my ſhoes?

Mrs Fl. No occaſion for that. [*Exeunt.*

Another room. Marianne *in bed.*

Enter Mrs Fleece'em *and* Toby.

Mrs Fl. This way! your hand!—Letty, my dear, the young gentleman I mentioned to you this morning, begs juſt to enquire after your health. There; I will leave you together: She is in the bed at the upper end of the room. I make no doubt, Sir, but you will behave with proper decorum. [*Exit.*

Toby. If you are afraid, you need not go out of the room.—The place is as dark as a dungeon! Upper end of the room! and how the deuce ſhould I know which that is? in the night, I can tell you, I ſhould be a good deal frightened to be ſo much in the dark, but it is well enough in the day, when one is about to make love; becauſe why, one is not ſo baſhful and ſhy? one can ſee to ſpeak one's mind with more boldneſs and courage, than in the light.—Me--Miſs! I thought ſhe had ſpoke; may be not. If I could but get hold of the curtains—the beſt way will be

to

to creep cloſe by the wall, then I ſhall be ſure to—Miſs! Miſs!

Mar. Who be dat dere?

Toby. I.—Dat dere? one may find out by her tongue ſhe is a foreigner: I am pretty right now, I believe.—What, Miſs, are you ſick?

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. But you are better, I hope?

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. I am glad on't: then I ſuppoſe, Miſs, if you pleaſe, I may begin to make love?

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. Iſs? gad, I think it is ready made to my hands. Did the gentlewoman, Mrs Madam your aunt, ſay any thing about and concerning of me?

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. Is it a ſecret?

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. Oh, then it would not be manners to ax: Well, Miſs, I hope you ben't averſe to the match?

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. Adzooks, then we are all off in an inſtant! What, Miſs, I ſuppoſe, you ben't willing to have me?

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. Oh, then we are on again, as before: then I may produce, I believe. I have brought you, Miſs, ſome curioſities, by way of preſentation, here in my pocket: will you pleaſe to accept—

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. Here, then, I offer them up to the ſhrine of thy beauty. May I crave leave to kiſs your lily-white hand?

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. On my knees let me thank you, faireſt creature! Her ſkin is vaſt ſoft. They be wonderful pretty things I have brought you; a'n't you mighty curious to ſee them?

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. May I draw up the curtain a bit, only juſt to give you a glimpſe?

Mar. Iſs.

Toby. So I will.—I ſhould be glad to have a peep at her too; ſhe is a mighty agreeable body; does not talk much, indeed; but is vaſt ſenſible, whatever ſhe ſays.—This, I believe, is the ſtring. I wonder if ſhe is as hand-

ſome

ſome as Betſy Bloſſom: Gad, if ſhe is, Miſs Bloſſom muſt look out for ſomebody elſe, I cán tell her. That's high enough, I believe.—That there thing in the leather caſe is a watch; if you touch the nob that juts out, it ſtrikes all the world like a clock; mother has one, but then him is as big as a warming-pan. Perhaps, Miſs, you mayn't find the trick out: I'll ſhew you.—Hey! what is this? Lord have mercy on me! ſhe is turned all of a ſudden as black as a crow! ſure as can be, a judgment for forſaking poor Betſy

Mar. Maſſa, won't you come here?

Toby. Not I.

Mar. I come to you, den.

Toby. The devil you will! you muſt run pretty faſt then.—Keep off me! holloa! houſe! ſtop the black thing that is hard at my— [*Exit.*

Enter Mrs Fleece'em.

Mrs Fl. The rude puppy had like to have run over me: What is the meaning—ha, the curtain drawn up? nay then—Marianne, who opened the window?

Mar. Little maſſa, to ſhew me de tick-tick—

Mrs Fl. Fool, did not I tell you—but it was my own fault, to truſt ſuch an ideot! Go, get out of my ſight! [*Exit* Marianne.

Enter Flaw.

Flaw. What the deuce is the matter? Toby is ſcampered down the ſtreet as if he had a legion of—

Mrs Fl. Matter? why, he has diſcovered the wench.

Flaw. 'Sdeath! I told you the folly of truſting theſe—we ſhall all be blown up in an inſtant: I ſaw the mother ſtop her chariot at the ſight of the whelp; ſo I ſuppoſe we ſhall have her back in a—

Mrs Fl. Ay? then ſomething muſt be ſuddenly done.

Flaw. Done! but what? I'll run after the boy, and hear his account of the matter.

Mrs Fl. Stay! had not you better, Mr Flaw, juſt leave with me Mr Aircaſtle's depoſit?

Flaw. Pho! time enough; is this a ſeaſon to ſettle accounts? [*Exit.*

Mrs Fl. So! I ſuppoſe he will march off with the money at laſt;

at laſt: I would have done as much, if I could but have touched it.

Enter Mrs Aircaſtle.

Mrs Air. Dear Madam, I am in the utmoſt confuſion! I am afraid that wild boy has miſbehaved himſelf in ſome manner or other.

Mrs Fl. A little miſtake, Madam; but I proteſt my niece is ſo terrified, that ſhe is unable to give me any account—

Mrs Air. Some rude prank of his, I dare ſay; I never could get his father—

Enter Colonel Gorget.

Gorg. The houſe is in ſuch confuſion, that I can't get any body to give me an anſwer.—Mrs Aircaſtle!

Mrs Air. Bleſs me, Colonel Gorget! who thought of meeting you here?

Gorg. An odd affair; but this lady, I ſuppoſe, Mrs Fleece'em, will be ſo kind to explain it. A pretty young lad, an enſign of mine, has, I am afraid, been tricked out of a large ſum of money by one Flaw, a fellow of very bad fame.

Mrs Air. How! Flaw?

Gorg. Under pretence of gaining promotion by this lady's aſſiſtance.

Mrs Fl. Mine, Sir? I promiſe you this is the firſt mention I ever heard of the matter.

Gorg. Juſt, Madam, as I ſuſpected: But pray, Mrs Aircaſtle, have you long had the honour of this lady's acquaintance?

Mrs Air. Acquaintance? Lord, Colonel, I am terrified out of my wits. Your ear for a moment.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. A note, Madam, which you are deſired directly to read.

Mrs Fl. Flaw's hand. [*Reads.*] "The game is up—we "are blown—make off as faſt as you can." As matters ſtand, the beſt advice I can take. [*Going off.*

Mrs Air. Madam, you are not going to leave us?

Mrs Fl. Only juſt to enquire how my niece does after her fright; I ſhall be back immediately. [*Exit.*

Gorg.

Gorg. How! is it poſſible? a capital ſum? Good heavens, Madam, and how could you truſt it without conſulting ſome friend?

Mrs Air. Why, we both thought Mr Flaw—

Gorg. Flaw? an infamous—

Enter Mr Aircaſtle.

Air. Why, what the deuce has been the matter amongſt you? They tell me Toby has been at home frightened out of his wits; and then run out directly with the waiter and ſome wench or other: I have ſent your Roger in ſearch of the whelp.—Ah, Colonel, are you there?

Gorg. Came the minute before you.

Air. Well, Colonel, hey, how? What, I ſuppoſe, by being here ſo ſoon, your affair has miſcarried.

Gorg. You are miſtaken indeed, my good friend.

Mrs Air. What affair?

Air. I forgot to tell it you, child: of a fine laſs in this town, that ſets up her perſon for ſale—

Mrs Air. How!

Air. And had the modeſty to fix the price to the colonel at five hundred guineas.

Mrs Air. Abominable! Can there be ſuch creatures?

Air. Aſk the colonel; that is all: an infamous harpy!

Gorg. Dear Mr Aircaſtle, you are here in an error.

Air. Error? why, did not you tell me of a line ſhe ſent you?

Gorg. Very true.

Air. And did not I advance the caſh?

Gorg. Do I pretend to deny it?

Air. Well then?

Gorg. Your patience a moment, my dear friend! I gave her the money, it is true—

Air. There, Mrs Aircaſtle! did not I tell you—

Gorg. But then, like a woman of honour—

Air. Well?

Gorg. She told me that ſhe did it but to try the ſtrength of my paſſion—

Air. Pho, pho!

Gorg. And ſo immediately returned it again.

Air. Pſhaw! a bam, Mrs Aircaſtle; don't believe it, my dear!

Gorg. To put the matter out of diſpute, I returned to your

your lodging directly; when, not finding you, I delivered the caſh to your lady.

Air. Indeed?

Gorg. In the very individual bag that you gave me; and before Maſter Toby, your ſon.

Air. Ay? and have you got the money, my dear?

Mrs Air. Yes, yes; I received it.—Was ever woman ſo duped! but this town is full of cozeners. [*Aſide.*

Gorg. I am afraid, Mr Aircaſtle, that it was pretty lucky for you I happened to have the caſh in my hand.

Air. Lucky? I don't underſtand—

Gor. Otherwiſe, it might have flown away with the reſt.

Air. Flown away?

Gorg. By what Mrs Aircaſtle has told me, I ſhrewdly ſuſpect you are got into the hands of ſome villainous ſharpers.

Air. How!

Gorg. Mr Flaw, and his coadjutrix.—Within! Who's there?—But we ſhall ſoon get the buſineſs explained.

Enter a Servant.

Gorg. Do you live with the perſon who inhabits this houſe?

Serv. But a very ſhort time.

Gorg. We wiſh to ſee her directly.

Serv. She is gone out.

Gorg. I thought ſo: and her niece too, I ſuppoſe?

Serv. Her niece, Sir?

Gorg. Ay.

Serv. I know no niece ſhe has.

Air. and Mrs Air. How!

Gorg. Juſt as I ſuſpected: Now, Sir, do you begin to find what a ſituation you are in?

Air. Then I am totally ruined! I told you, Mrs Aircaſtle, what would come of your—I remember Martin Moneytrap, of the Minories, was once in the very ſame way—he was taken-in by a Portugueſe Jew—

Gorg. A truce to recrimination, I beg! we have more material buſineſs in hand: Let this woman be directly purſued; and endeavour to recover at leaſt a part of—

O'Flan. [*without.*] Pray ſtep in a bit, if you plaſe, and refund freely the bill; or, upon my ſoul, I'll make you do me the favour by force!

Enter O'Flannagan *with* Mrs Fleece'em.

All. Mrs Fleece'em?

O'Flan. Yes, yes; it is, ſure enough; ſhe overtook me, as I met her hard by.

Gorg. We are obliged to you then for the lady's return?

O'Flan. You may ſay that: I ſtopped her juſt in the nick, as ſhe was ſlily walking off in a coach. Arrah, put off your hood, my dear honey; don't be ſhame-faced amongſt your friends and acquaintance.

Mrs Fl. Stand off, you rude brute!

O'Flan Better words, if you plaſe! you wanted to ſend me to be feathered abroad; ſo, in return, I ſhall beg lave, Madam, to pluck you at home.

Gorg. No violence to the lady, I beg, Sir! ſhe now finds ſhe is detected, and, I dare ſay, will do every body all the juſtice ſhe can. And firſt, Madam, as to the capital ſum which you had the addreſs to obtain from this—

Mrs Fl. What concern have I in the buſineſs; the gentleman himſelf gave it into the poſſeſſion of Flaw.

Gorg. Mr Aircaſtle!

Air. That's true, I confeſs.

Gorg. But, ſince that, has not the property ſuffered a transfer?

Mrs Fl. Not to me: but if you doubt it, you may ſearch the houſe when you pleaſe.

Gorg. Then it has got into worſe hands, I'm afraid.

Enter Mrs Simony.

Mrs Sim. I ſee by their confuſion my information was right —Not to interrupt you, Madam, I ſhould take it as a particular favour if you would immediately return the little note I left in your hands—for I have not a moment to ſpare.

Mrs Fl. Note, Madam? what note? I recollect, indeed, a hymn that you—

Mrs Sim. Well, Madam, that hymn, if you pleaſe.

Mrs Fl. I gave it directly to Flaw, to get a friend of his to ſet it to muſic.

Mrs Sim. Muſic? Ladies and gentlemen, a bank-note, I proteſt!

Air.

Air. What! ſet a bank-note to muſic? I never heard of ſuch a thing.

Gorg. And pray, Madam, what could induce you to truſt that woman with a bank-note?

Mrs Fl. That ſhe will not ſo readily own; a little earneſt of a much larger bribe, to procure her huſband a living.

Gorg. How, Madam! I hope your huſband was not appriſed of this application?

Mrs Sim. The Doctor was totally ignorant; knew nothing about it.

Gorg. I am very happy to hear it: I ſhould be ſorry to find that a gentleman, whoſe peculiar duty it is to ſuſtain the purity of his profeſſion, ſhould himſelf be the very perſon to ſoil it; or that an office of ſo ſacred a nature, ſhould be ſolicited by ſuch unſanctified means.

Mrs Sim. I believe my Doctor, Sir, will be hardly ſuſpected: but I have not time to ſay more for the preſent; I ſhall be ſtay'd for, and have not a moment to ſpare.

[*Exit.*

Gor. Let her go! that plunder, however, is fair.

Air. Well, well! but, Colonel, notwithſtanding all that you ſay, I have heard there was a bet once made between the patron of a living and one Parſon Plurality—Plurality had been a Preſbyterian—his father keeps a paſtry-cook's ſhop in Spring-gardens—juſt where Cox's muſeum—by the by, they tell me, Cox will get deviliſh rich by his lottery.

Gorg. But if we don't uſe ſome diſpatch, I am afraid you will get deviliſh poor.

Enter Prig, *in a waiſtcoat and cap.*

Prig. Where is this damn'd infernal—ſhe is burrow'd here, but I'll make her—

Air. Who the deuce can this be?

Mrs Fl. Some madman eſcaped from his keepers, I reckon.

Prig. Yes, yes, I am eſcaped, but not mad: and if there is law to be had, I'll make you to know—keepers! —if I had not luckily met with ſome friends at the turnpike, I ſhould have been kept pretty cloſe, I believe. I recollected your footman that ſtood at the door, and gueſs'd you were not far off.

Air.

Air. What is this? a madman? I went to ſee one once in bedlam—he— [*Exit* Prig.

Enter Roger.

Oh, here is Roger. Well, did you find where Toby is?

Roger. Yes, yes, I found un out; and in ſweet company too.

Mrs Air. Company?

Roger. A clergyman, Betſy Bloſſom, and our waiter at home.

Air. Zounds! I hope the boy is not married.

Roger. No; but they would have been, if I had not come juſt in the nick to fetch un away.

Air. Where is he?

Roger. In a ſhop at the corner. I wanted un to ſtep over; but he would not, becauſe why, he ſays as how the houſe is haunted.

Air. And why not? There was the manor houſe in the pariſh of Paddington—Mrs Aircaſtle, you may remember it formerly belonged to the Jeſſops; but, by the marriage of the heireſs with one of the Haſlewoods—

Gorg. Come, come, it is a lucky prevention; and, to give you a little conſolation, I believe I ſhall be able to recover your money from Flaw.

Mrs Air. and Air. How, Colonel?

Gorg. I took the liberty, by way of prevention, to get him ſecured for the money received of my enſign.

Air. Indeed?

Gorg. And, as this affair is rather of a criminal nature he will think himſelf happy to eſcape by reſtoring the plunder.

Air. My kind Colonel!

Gorg. I hope, Madam, this will make you amends for your diſappointment in the five hundred pounds. [*Aſide.*

O'Flan. But what the divil is all this to my bill?

Gorg. Did this woman receive it?

Mrs Fl. Flaw had it; but it wants ſome days of being due.

Gorg. Then we ſhall be able to ſtop the payment, at leaſt; it is ſafe, never fear.

O'Flan. That's lucky, however: and, by all I can hear, my beſt way, Mr Colonel, will be to make an emigration back to Irelard again.

Gorg. By all means, and, by this time, many more of your

your countrymen, would, I believe, be glad to follow your ſteps.

O'Flan. Like enough.

Air. And if, Mrs Aircaſtle, we were to return back again—

Gorg. It would be the wiſeſt thing you could do.

Mrs Air. What, to vegetate like a parcel of plants?

Gorg. Ay, Madam; for there are trees that won't bear tranſplanting; they thrive beſt in their natural ſoil.

Air. That's true, I can anſwer. Laſt ſummer, I tranſplanted ſome elm-trees—

Gorg. Lord! Mr Aircaſtle, how can you—

Air. Zounds! I muſtn't ſpeak—Sir, let me tell you the ſtory of the elm. [*To* O'Flannagan.

Gorg. You, Madam, till you have made all the ſatisfaction you can, muſt be contented to ſuffer a little confinement; after which, unleſs your country ſhould have ſome other call upon you, you may diſpoſe of yourſelf as you pleaſe.

Mrs Fl. I am detected, diſtreſſed, and muſt therefore ſubmit! but, gentlemen, if all who have offended like us, were like us produced to the public, much higher names would adorn the Old Bailey Chronicle than thoſe of poor Fleece'em and Flaw.

THE

MAID OF BATH;

A COMEDY,

IN

THREE ACTS.

PROLOGUE.

Written by Mr GARRICK.—Spoken by Mr FOOTE.

WHO but has read, if you have read at all,
Of one, they *Jack the giant-killer* call?
He was a bold, ſtout, able-bodied man,
To clear the world of *fee, faw, fum,* his plan:
Whene'er a *monſter* had within his power
A young and tender *virgin* to devour,
To cool his blood, *Jack,* like a ſkilful ſurgeon,
Bled well the *monſter,* and releas'd the *virgin*;
Like the beſt doctors, did a method learn,
Of curing fevers never to return.
Mayn't I this *giant-killing* trade renew?
I have my *virgin* and my *monſter* too.
Tho' I can't boaſt, like *Jack,* a liſt of ſlain,
I wield a lancet, and can breathe a vein;
To his Herculean arm my nerves are weak,
He cleft his foes, I only make mine ſqueak:
As Indians would their ſlaves to pleaſe the court,
I'll tickle mine, *Great Sirs,* to make you ſport.
To prove myſelf an humble imitator,
Giants are *vices,* and *Jack* ſtands for *ſatire*;
By tropes and figures, as it fancy ſuits,
Paſſions riſe monſters, men ſink down to brutes;
All talk and write in allegoric diction,
Court, city, town, and country run to fiction!
Each daily paper allegory teaches——
Placemen are *locuſts,* and *contractors leeches*:
Nay, even *Change-Alley,* where no bard repairs,
Deals much in fiction to paſs off their wares;
For whence the roaring there?—from *bulls* and *bears!*
The gaming fools are *doves,* the *knaves* are *rooks,*
Change-Alley bankrupts waddle out *lame ducks!*
But, Ladies, blame not you your gaming ſpouſes,
For you, as well as they, have *pigeon*-houſes.
To change the figure—formerly I've been,
To ſtraggling follies only *whipper-in;*
By royal bounty rais'd, I mount the back
Of my own *hunter,* and I keep the *pack:*
Tallyo!—a rank old *fox* we now purſue,
So ſtrong the ſcent, you'll run him full in view:
If we can't kill ſuch *brutes* in human ſhape,
Let's fright 'em, that your *chickens* may eſcape;
Rouſe 'em, when o'er their tender prey they're grumbling,
And rub their gums at leaſt, to mar their mumbling.

EPILOGUE.

EPILOGUE.

Written by R. CUMBERLAND, Eſq.—Spoken by Mrs JEWELL.

CONFIDING in the juſtice of the place,
To you *The Maid of Bath* ſubmits her caſe:
Wrong'd, and defeated of three ſeveral ſpouſes,
She lays her damages for nine full houſes.
Well, Sirs, you've heard the parties *pro* and *con.*
Do the *pro's* carry it? ſhall the ſuit go on?
Speak hearts for us! to them we make appeal:
Tell us not what you think, but what you feel:
Aſk us, why bring a private cauſe to view?
We anſwer with a ſigh—becauſe 'tis true:
For tho' invention is our Poet's trade,
Here he but copies parts which others play'd.
For on a ramble, late one ſtarry night,
With Aſmodeo, his familiar ſprite,
High on the wing, by his conductor's ſide,
This guilty ſcene the indignant Bard deſcried;
Soaring in air, his ready pen he drew,
And daſh'd the glowing ſatire as he flew:
For in theſe rank luxuriant times there needs
Some ſtrong bold hand to pluck the noxious weeds.
The rake of ſixty, crippled hand and knee,
Who ſins on claret, and repents on tea;
The witleſs macaroni, who purloins
A few cant words, which ſome pert gambler coins;
The undomeſtic Amazonian dame,
Staunch to her *coterie*, in deſpite of Fame;
Theſe are the victims of our Poet's plan:
But moſt, that *monſter*—an unfeeling man.
When ſuch a foe provokes him to the fight,
Tho' maim'd, out ſallies the puiſſant knight;
Like Withrington, maintains the glorious ſtrife,
And only yields his laurels—with his life.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Chriſtopher Cripple —	Mr Woodward.
Mr Flint, — —	Mr Foote.
Major Rackett, — —	Mr Aickin.
Billy Button, — —	Mr Weston.
Peter Poultice, — —	Mr Fearon.
Fillup, — —	Mr Davis.
Mynheer Sour-Crout, —	Mr Castle.
Monſ. de Jarſey, — —	Mr Loyd.
John, — —	Mr Jacobs.
Lady Catharine Coldſtream, —	Mrs Fearon.
Mrs Linnet, — —	Miſs Platt.
Miſs Linnet, — —	Mrs Jewell.
Maid, — —	Mrs Weston.

Waiters, &c.

ACT I.

ACT I.

The Bear Inn at Bath.

Enter Fillup.

Fil. WHY, John, Roger, Ralphy, Harry Buckle! what a-dickens are become of the lads? Can't you hire?—Zure, zure, theſe whelps are enow to make a man maz'd!

Enter ſeveral Waiters.

All. Coming, Sir!

Fil. Coming! ay, zo be Chriſtmas, I think. Where be'ſt thee gwain, boy? what, I reckon thee ca'ſt not zee for thy eyes—Here, take the candle, and light the gentlefolk in.

Enter John.

John. Carry a couple of candles into the Daphne.

[*Exeunt Waiters.*

Fil. John, who is it be a come?

John. Major Rackett, in a chay and four, from the Devizes.

Fil. What, the young youth, that laſt zeaſon carried away wi un Mrs Muzleneſes prentice?

John. Miſs Patty Prim, from the Grove?

Fil. Ay, zure: thee doſt know her well enow.

John. The ſame.

Fil. Zure and zure, then we ſhall have old doing and by; he is a deadly wild ſpark, thee doſt know.

John. But as good a cuſtomer as comes to the Bear.

Fil. That's zure enough: Then why doſt not run and light un in? Stay! gee I the candle; I woole go and light un in myzelf. [*Exit.*

Rack. [*without.*] Give the poſt-boys half-a-guinea between 'em.

John. Ay, there is ſome life in this chap! theſe are your gueſts that give ſpirit to Bath: Your paralytical people, that come down to be parboil'd and pump'd, do no good that I know to the town, unleſs indeed to the phyſical

phyſical tribe: how I hate to ſee an old fellow hobble into the houſe, with his feet wrapt in flannel, puſhing forth his fingers like a croſs in the hands to point out the different roads on a common!—Huſh!

Enter Rackett *and* Fillup.

Fil. I hope, Meſter, you do zee your way: there be two ſteps; that you do know. Well, zure, I be heartily glad to zee your Honour at Bath.

Rack. I thank you, my honeſt friend Fillup. What, have you many people in town?

Fil. There ben't a power, pleaſe your Honour, at preſent. Some zick folk that do no zort of zarvis, and a few layers that be com'd off a the zircuit, that's all.

Rack. Birds of paſſage, ha, Fillup?

John. True, Sir; for at the beginning of the term, when the woodcocks come in, the others fly off.

Rack. Are you there, honeſt Jack?

John. And happy to ſee your Honour in town.

Rack. Well, Mr Fillup, and how go you on? any clubs fix'd as yet?

Fil. No, Zir, not to zay fixed; there be parſon Pulruddock from the Land's-End, Mr Evan Thomas, a Welch attorney, two Briſtol men, and a few port-drinking people, that dine every day in the Lion; the claret-club ben't expected down till the end of next week.

Rack. Any body in the houſe that I know?

Fil. Yes, zure: behind the bar there be Sir Chriſtopher Cripple, freſh out of a fit of the gout, drinking a drop of punch along wy Meſter Peter Poultice, the potter-carrier on the Parade.

Rack. The gazettes of the Bath; the very men I want. Give my compliments to the gentlemen, and tell them I ſhould be glad of their company. But, perhaps it may be troubleſome for Sir Chriſtopher—

Fil. No, no, not at all; at preſent he's a little tender for zure; but I warrant un he'll make a ſhift to hobble into the room. [*Exit.*

Rack. Well, Jack, and how fares it with you? you have throve, I hope, ſince I ſaw you?

John. Throve? no, no, Sir: your Honour knows that during the ſummer, taverns and turnſpits have but little to do at Bath.

Rack.

Rack. True. But what is become of your colleague, honeſt Ned? I hope he has not quitted his place.

John. The ſhare he had in your Honour's intrigue with Miſs Prim, ſoon made this city too hot for poor Ned.

Rack. Then why did not the fool go to London with me? The fellow has humour, ſpirit, and ſings a good ſong. I intended to have recommend him to one of the theatres.

John. Why, Sir, Ned himſelf had a bias that way; but his uncle, Alderman Surcingle the ſaddler, a piece of a Puritan, would not give his conſent.

Rack. Why not?

John. He was afraid that kind of life might corrupt or endanger Ned's morals; ſo has ſet him up in a bagnio at the end of Long-Acre.

Rack. Nay, if the fellow falls after ſuch a ſecurity—

Sir Chr. [*without.*] At what a rate the raſcal is running! Zounds, I believe the fellow thinks I can foot it as faſt as Eclipſe! Slower, and be—

Enter Sir Chriſtopher Cripple *and* Fillup, *followed by* Peter Poultice.

Where is this rakehelly, rantipole?—Jack, ſet me a chair. —So, Sir! you muſt poſſeſs a good ſhare of aſſurance to return to this town, after the tricks you have played.—Fillup, fetch in the punch!—Well, you ungracious young dog, and what is become of the poor wench? Ah, poor Patty! and here too my reputation is ruined as well as the girl's.

Rack. Your reputation? that's a good jeſt.

Sir Chr. Yes, Sirrah, it is; and all owing to my acquaintance with you: I, forſooth, am called your adviſer; as if your own contriving head and profligate heart ſtood in need of any aſſiſtance from me.

Rack. Well, but, dear Sir Kit, how can this idle ſtuff affect you?

Sir Chr. How? eaſy enough: I will be judged now by Poultice.—Peter, ſpeak truth! before this here blot in my eſcutcheon, have not you obſerved, when I went to either a ball or a breakfaſting, how eagerly all the girls gathered round me, gibing, and joking, and gigling? gad take me, as facetious and free as if I were their father!

Poul. Nothing but truth.

Fil. That's truth, to my zertain knowledge; for I have

zeen

zeen the women folk tittering, 'till they were ready to break their zides, when your Honour was throwing your double tenders about.

Sir Chr. True, honeſt Fillup.—Before your curs'd affair, neither maid, widow, or wife was aſhamed of converſing with me; but now, when I am wheeled into the room, not a ſoul under ſeventy will venture within ten yards of my chair: I am ſhunn'd worſe than a leper in the days of King Lud; an abſolute hermit in the midſt of a croud! Speak, Fillup, is not this a melancholy truth?

Fil. Very molycolly, zure!

Sir Chr. But this is not all; the crop-eared curs of the city have taken it into their empty heads to neglect me: formerly, Mr Mayor could not devour a cuſtard, but I received a civil card to partake; but now, the rude raſcals, in their buſhy bobs, bruſh by me without deigning to bow! in ſhort, I do not believe I have had a corporation cruſt in my mouth for theſe ſix months: you might as well expect a miniſter of ſtate at the manſion-houſe, as ſee me at one of their feaſts—

Fil. His Honour tells nothing but truth.

Sir Chr. So that I am almoſt famiſhed, as well as forſaken.

Fil. Quite famiſhed, as a body may zay, Meſter.

Sir Chr. Oh, Tom, Tom, you have been a curſed acquaintance to me! what a number of fine turtles and fat haunches of veniſon has your wickedneſs loſt me!

Rack. My dear Sir Kit, for this I merit your thanks: how often Dr Carawitchet has told you, rich food and *champaigne* would produce you nothing but poor health and *real* pain!

Sir Chr. What ſignifies the prattle of ſuch a punning puppy as he? what, I ſuppoſe, you would ſtarve me, you ſcoundrel! when I am got out of one fit, how the devil am I to gether ſtrength to encounter the next? do you think it is to be done by ſipping and ſlopping. [*drinks.*]—But no matter! Look you, Major Racket, all between us is now at an end; and, Sir, I ſhould conſider it as a particular favour if you would take no further notice of me: I ſincerely deſire to drop your acquaintance; and, as to myſelf, I am fixed, poſitively fixed, to reform.

Rack. Reform? Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Chr. Reform! and why not? Well! you ſhall ſee!

the

the whole city ſhall ſee! As ſoon as ever I get to my lodgings, I will ſend for Luke Lattitat and Codicil, and make a handſome bequeſt to the hoſpital.

Rack. Stuff!

Sir. Chr. Then I am reſolved to be carried every day to the twelve o'clock prayers at the Abbey, and regularly twice of a Sunday.

Rack. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Chr. Ha, ha, ha! you may laugh; but I'll be damn'd if I don't! and if all this don't recover my credit, I am determined, beſides, to hire a houſe in Harlequin-row, and be a conſtant hearer at the Counteſs's chapel—

Rack. And ſo, perhaps, turn out a field preacher in time.

Sir Chr. I don't know but I may.

Rack. Well then, my dear Sir Chriſtopher, adieu! But, if we muſt part, let us part as friends ſhould; not with dry lips, and in anger. Fillup, take care of the knight. [*Fillup fills the glaſſes.*] Well, faith my old crony, I can't ſay but I am heartily ſorry to loſe you; many a brave batch have we broached in our time.

Sir Chr. True, Tom, true.

Rack. Don't you remember the bout we had at the Tuns, in the days of Plump Jack? I ſhall never forget! After you had felled poor Falſtaff with a pint bumper of Burgundy, how you beſtrode the proſtrate hero, and in his own manner cried, "Crown me, ye ſpirits that delight in "gen'rous wine!"

Sir Chr. Vanity, mere vanity, Tom, nothing but vanity!

Rack. And then another day at the—But repleniſh, Fillup! the bowl is not empty?

Sir. Chr. Enough, enough!

Rack. What, don't flinch, man! it is but to finiſh the bowl.—Come, Sir Chriſtopher, one tender ſqueeze!

Sir Chr. Take care of my hand! none of your old tricks, you young dog.

Rack. Gentle as the lick of a lap-dog; there!—What o'clock is it, Fillup?

Fil. I'll tell you, Meſter [*looks at his watch.*] Juſt turned a ſix.

Rack. So ſoon? hang it, Sir Kit, it is too early to part: come, what ſay you to one ſupper more? but one, by way

way of ſacrifice to the ſacred feelings of friendſhip? honeſt Fillup knows your taſte; he will toſs you up a—

Sir Chr. Not a morſel, Tom, if you would give me the univerſe!

Rack. Pho, man! only a Sandwich or ſo. Fillup, what haſt got in the houſe?

Fil. A vamous John Dorey, two pair of ſoals, and there be a joint of Lanſdown mutton; and then, you do know, my Molly be vamous in making marrow-puddens.

Rack. A fine bill of fare.—Come, knight, what do you chuſe?

Sir Chr. Me! why you ſeem to have forgot what I told you juſt now.

Rack. Your deſign to reform? not at all; and I think you quite right; perfectly ſo, as I hope to be ſaved: but what needs all this hurry? to-morrow is a new day; it will then be early enough. Fillup, ſend us in juſt what you will.

Sir Chr. You are a coaxing, cajoling young dog.—Well, if it muſt be ſo, Fillup, it muſt. Fillup, get me an anchovy-toaſt; and, do you hear? a red herring or two, for my ſtomach is damnably weak.

Fil. I ſhall to be zure, zur. [*Exit.*

Rack. So! that's ſettled.—Now, Poultice! come forward.—Well, my blades, and what news have you got ſtirring amongſt you?

Poul. Except a little run of ſore throats about the beginning of autumn, and a few feeble fellows that dropt off with the leaves in October, the town is in tolerable—

Rack. Pox of the dead and the dying! but what amuſements have you got for the living?

Poul. There is the new playhouſe, you know.

Rack. True: but as to the muſical world; what hopes have we there? any of the opera people among you? Apropos—what is become of my little flame, *La petite Roſignole*, the lively little Linnet! is ſhe ſtill—

Sir Chr. Loſt, totally loſt!

Rack. Loſt! what, left you? I am ſorry for that.

Sir Chr. Worſe, worſe!

Rack. I hope ſhe an't dead.

Sir Chr. Ten thouſand times worſe than all that!

Rack. How the deuce can that be?

Sir Chr. Juſt going to be buried alive—to be married.

Rack.

Rack. Pho! is that all? The ceremony was, indeed, formerly looked upon as a kind of metaphorical grave; but the ſyſtem is changed, and marriage is now conſidered as an entrance to a new and better kind of life.

Sir Chr. Indeed!

Rack. Pſhaw! who talks now of the drudgery of domeſtic duties, of nuptial chains, and of bonds? mere obſolete words! they did well enough in the dull days of Queen Beſs; but a modern laſs puts on fetters to enjoy the more freedom, and pledges her faith to one, that ſhe may be at liberty to beſtow her favours on all.

Sir Chr. What vaſt improvements are daily made in our morals! what an unfortunate dog am I, to come into the world at leaſt half a century too ſoon! what would I give to be born twenty years hence! there will be damned fine doings then! hey, Tom? But I'm afraid our poor little girl won't have it in her power to profit by theſe prodigious improvements.

Rack. Why not?

Sir Chr. Oh, when you once hear the name of her partner—

Rack. Who is it?

Sir Chr. An acquaintance of yours: only that old fuſty, ſhabby, ſhuffling, money-loving, water-drinking, mirth-marring, amorous old hunks, Mr Solomon Flint.

Rack. He that enjoys—owns, I mean—half the farms in the country?

Sir Chr. He, even he.

Rack. Why, he is ſixty at leaſt: what a filthy old goat! But then, how does this deſign ſuit with his avarice? the girl has no fortune.

Sir Chr. No more than what her talents will give her.

Rack. Why, the poltroon does not mean to profit by them?

Sir Chr. Perhaps, if his family ſhould chance to encreaſe: but I believe his main motive is the hopes of an heir.

Rack. For which he muſt be indebted to ſome of his neighbours: in that point of light, the matter is not ſo much amiſs. It is impoſſible ſhe can be fond of the fellow; and it is very hard, with the opportunities this place will afford, if, in leſs than a month, I don't—

Sir Chr. This place! why, you don't ſuppoſe he'll truſt her here for an hour?

Rack. How!

Sir Chr. Not a moment: the ſcheme is all ſettled; the rumbling old family coach carries her immediately from the church door to his moated, haunted, old houſe in the country.

Rack. Indeed?

Sir Chr. Where, beſides the Argus himſelf, ſhe will be watched by no leſs than two brace of his ſiſters; four as malicious, muſty old maids as ever were ſoured by ſolitude, and the neglect of the world.

Rack. A guard not to be corrupted or cozened. Why, Sir Chriſtopher, in a Chriſtian country this muſt not be ſuffered. What! a miſerable tattered old fellow like him, to monopolize ſuch a tempting creature as her?

Sir Chr. A diabolical plan!

Rack. Beſides, the ſecluding and immuring a girl poſſeſſed of her elegant talents, is little better than robbing the world.

Sir Chr. Infamous! worſe than a rape! but where are the means to prevent it?

Rack. Much might be done, if you would lend us your aid.

Sir Chr. Me? of what uſe can I—And ſo, you raſcal, you want to employ me again as your pimp?

Rack. You take the thing wrong: I only wiſh you to ſtand forth, my dear knight; and, like myſelf, be the protector of innocence, and a true friend to the public.

Sir Chr. A true friend to the public! a fine ſtalking-horſe that! But, I fear, like other pretenders, Tom, when your own private purpoſe is ſerved, the poor public will be left in the lurch. But, however, the poor girl does deſerve to be ſaved; and if I can do any thing, not inconſiſtent with my plan of reforming—

Rack. That was ſpoke like yourſelf. Upon what terms are you and Flint at preſent?

Sir Chr. Oil and vinegar are ſcarce ſo oppoſite.

Rack. Poultice, you ſmoke a pipe with him ſometimes: pray, who are your party?

Poul. Mynheer Sour-Crout, Monſieur de Jarſey the port manufacturer, Billy Button the tailor, Mr Flint and I, moſt evenings take a whiff here.

Rack. Are you all in his confidence on this great occaſion?

Poul.

Poul. Upon this caſe we have had conſultations; but Billy Button is firſt in his favour, he likes his preſcription the beſt.

Rack. From this quarter we muſt begin the attack: could not we contrive to convene this illuſtrious ſenate to-night?

Poul. I ſhould think eaſily enough.

Rack. But before you meet here?

Poul. Without doubt.

Rack. My dear Poultice, will you undertake the commiſſion?

Poul. I will feel their pulſes, to oblige Sir Chriſtopher Cripple.

Sir Chr. But, Peter, doſt really think this raſh fool is determined?

Poul. I believe, Sir Chriſtopher, he is firmly perſuaded, that nothing will allay this uncommon heat in his blood, but ſwallowing the pill matrimonial.

Rack. We muſt contrive at leaſt to take off the gilding, and ſee what effect that will have on his courage.

[*Exit* Poultice.

Sir Chr. Well, Major, unfold! what can you mean by this meeting?

Rack. Is it poſſible you can be at a loſs? you who have ſo long ſtudied mankind?

Sir Chr. Explain.

Rack. Can't you conceive what infinite ſtruggles muſt have been felt by this fellow, before he could muſter up courage to engage in this dreadful perilous ſtate. How often have you heard the proverbial puppy affirm, that marriage was fiſhing for a ſingle eel among a barrel of ſnakes! what infinite odds, that you laid hold of the eel! and then a million to one but he ſlipt through your fingers!

Sir Chr. True, true.

Rack. Can't you, then, gueſs what will be his feelings and fears when it comes to the puſh? Do you think public opinion, his various doubts of himſelf, and of her, the pride of his family, and the loud claims of avarice (his ruling paſſion till now), won't prove near an equipoiſe to his love?

Sir Chr. Without doubt.

Rack. At this critical period, won't the concurring advice

vice of all his aſſociates, think you, deſtroy the balance at once?

Sir Chr. Very probably, Tom, I confeſs.

Rack. As to our engines, there is no fear of them: Billy Button you have under your thumb; I'll purchaſe a pipe of port of de Jarſey; and we are ſure of old Sour-Crout for a hamper of hock.

Sir Chr. Right, right!—But, after all, what is to become of the girl? Come, Tom, I'll have no foul play ſhewn to her.

Rack. Her real happineſs is part of my project.

Enter Fillup.

Fil. Here be Mynheer Sour-Crout and Mounſeer de Jarſey a come.

Sir Chr. We will attend them.—Only think, Tom, what a villain you will be to make me the ſecret inſtrument of any more miſchief.

Rack. Never fear.

Sir Chr. Particularly, too, now I am fixed to reform.

Rack. It would be criminal in the higheſt degree.

Sir Chr. Ah, rot your hypocritical face!—I am half afraid, Tom, to truſt you; I'll be hanged if you ha'n't ſome wicked deſign yourſelf on the girl! but, however, I waſh my hands of the guilt.

Rack. My dear knight, don't be ſo ſqueamiſh! But—the gentlemen within!—Stay! who have we here? Ah, my old friend Mr Button!

Enter Button.

But. Your Worſhip is welcome to town!—But where is Sir—Oh! I underſtood as how your Honour had ſent for me all in a hurry: I ſhould have brought the patterns before, if I had them: the worſt of my enemies can't ſay but Billy Button is punctual. Here they be: I received them to-night by Wiltſhire's waggon, that flies in eight days.

Sir Chr. To-morrow, Billy, will do; take a ſeat.

But. I had rather ſtand.

Sir Chr. I wanted to talk to you upon another affair.—What, I ſuppoſe, you are very buſy at preſent?

But. Vaſt buſy, your Honour.

Sir Chr.

Sir Chr. This marriage, I reckon, takes up moſt of your time.

But. Your Honour?

Rack. Miſs Linnet, and your old Mr Flint, you know.

But. Oh, ay! But the ſquire does not intend to cut a daſh till the ſpring.

Sir Chr. No! nothing has happened, I hope? affairs are all fixed?

But. As a rock: I am ſure, now, it can't fail; becauſe why, I have premptory orders to ſcour and new-line the coachman and footman's old frocks; and am, beſides, to turn the lace, and freſh-button the ſuit his Honour made up twenty years ago comes next Lent, when he was ſhreif for the county.

Rack. Nay, then it is determined.

But. Or he would never have gone to ſuch an expence.

Sir Chr. Well, Billy, and what is your private opinion, after all, of this match?

But. It is not becoming, your Honour knows, for a tradeſman like me to give his—

Rack. Why not? Don't you think now, Billy, it is a bold undertaking for a man at his time of life?

But. Why, to be ſure, his Honour is a little ſtricken in years, as a body may ſay; and, take all the care that one can, time will wear the nap from even ſuperfine cloth; ſtitches tear, and elbows will out, as they ſay—

Sir Chr. And beſides, Bill, the bride's a mere baby.

But. Little better, your Honour: but ſhe is a tight bit of ſtuff, and I am confident will turn out well in the wearing. I once had ſome thoughts myſelf of taking meaſure of Miſs.

Rack. Indeed!

But. Yes; and, to my thinking, had made a pretty good progreſs; becauſe why, at church of a Sunday ſhe ſuffered me to look for the leſſons; and moreover, many a time and oft have we ſung pſalms out of the very ſame book.

Rack. That was going a great way.

But. Nay, beſides, and more than all that, ſhe has at this precious minute of time a pin-cuſhion by her ſide of my own preſentation.

Rack. Ay! and how came the treaty broke off?

But. Why, who ſhould ſtep in in the nick, but the very ſquire himſelf?

Sir Chr.

Sir Chr. I am afraid, Bill, your beauty is a little bit of the jilt.

But. No, your Worſhip; it is all along with her mother: 'cauſe her great aunt, by her father's ſide, was a clargyman's daughter, ſhe is as pragmatic and proud as the Pope; ſo, forſooth, nothing will pleaſe her for Miſs but a bit of quality binding.

Rack. I knew the refuſal could not come from the girl; for, without a compliment, Billy, there is no compariſon between you and the—why, you are a pretty ſlight, tight, light, nimble—

But. Yes; very nimble and ſlight, and we are both of a height: ha, ha, ha!

Sir Chr. Why, love has made Billy a poet.

But. No, no; quite accident, as I hope to be kiſſed.

Rack. And your rival is a fuſty, foggy, lumbering log!

But. For all the world like my gooſe; plaguy hot and damned heavy, your Honour.

Sir Chr. Why, Billy blazes to-day.

But. And though my purſe, mayhap, ben't ſo heavy as his'n, yet I contrives to pay every body their own.

Rack. I dare ſay.

But. Ay; and I have, beſides, two houſes in Avon-Street; and, perhaps, a bit or two of land in a corner.

Sir Chr. Oh, the curmudgeonly rogue!

But. And, moreover, if Madam Linnet talks of families, I would have her to know that I have powerful relations as well as herſelf: there's Tommy Button, my uncle's own ſon, that has an employment under the government.

Sir Chr. Ay, Billy! what is it?

But. At this very time he is an exciſeman at Wapping. And, beſides, there is my couſin Paul Puff, that kept the great paſtrycoock's ſhop in the Strand, now lives at Brentford, and is made a juſtice of the peace.

Rack. As this is the caſe, I don't think it will be difficult yet to bring matters to bear.

Sir Chr. If Bill will but follow directions.

But. I hope your Honour never found me deficient.

Sir Chr. We will inſtruct you further within. Major Racket, your hand!

But. Let me help you. Folks may go further and fare worſe, as they ſay: why, I have ſome thoughts, if I can call

call in my debts, to retire into the country, and ſet up for a gentleman.

Rack. Why not? one meets with a great number of them who were never bred to the buſineſs.

But. I a'n't much of a mechanic at preſent; I does but juſt meaſure and cut.

Rack. No?

But. I don't think that I have ſat croſs legg'd for theſe ſix years.

Rack. Indeed?

But. And who can tell, your Honour, in a few years, if I behaves well, but, like couſin Puff, I may get myſelf put in the commiſſion.

Sir Chr. The Worſhipful William Button, Eſq.—it ſounds well. I can tell you, Billy, there have been magiſtrates made of full as bad materials as you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Enter Mrs Linnet *and* Miſs Linnet.

Mrs Lin. YES, Kitty, it is in vain to deny it! I am convinced there is ſome little, low, paltry paſſion, that lurks in your heart.

Miſs Lin. Indeed, my dear mother, you wrong me.

Mrs Lin. Indeed, my dear Miſs, but I don't! what elſe could induce you to reject the addreſſes of a lover like this! Ten thouſand pounds a year! Gads my life, there is not a lady in town would refuſe him, let her rank be ever ſo—

Miſs Lin. Not his fortune, I firmly believe.

Mrs Lin. Well! and who now-a-days marries any thing elſe? Would you refuſe an eſtate, becauſe it happen'd to be a little incumber'd? you muſt conſider the man in this caſe as a kind of a mortgage.

Miſs Lin. But, the diſproportion of years—

Mrs Lin. In your favour, child; the incumbrance will be the ſooner removed.

Miſs Lin. Then, my dear mother, our minds; how very widely they differ! my nature is liberal and frank, though I am but a little removed from mediocrity; his heart,

heart, in the very boſom of wealth, is ſhut to every ſocial ſenſation.

Mrs Lin. And yet, Miſs, this heart you have had the good luck to unlock. I hope you don't urge his offers to you as a proof of his paſſion for money? why, you forget yourſelf, Kate; who, in the name of wonder, do you think that you are? What, becauſe that you have a baby face, and can bawl a few ballads—

Miſs Lin. Nay, Madam, you know I was never vain of my talents; if they can procure me a decent ſupport, and in ſome meaſure repay my father and you for their kind cultivation—

Mrs Lin. And how long are you ſure your talents, as you call 'em, will ſerve you? Are a ſet of features ſecure againſt time? Won't a ſingle ſore throat deſtroy the boaſted power of your pipe? But ſuppoſe that ſhould not fail, who can inſure you againſt the whim of the public? Will they always continue their favour?

Miſs Lin. Perhaps not.

Mrs Lin. What muſt become of you then? Now by this means you are ſafe, above the reach of ill fortune. Beſides, child, to put your own intereſt out of the queſtion, have you no tender feelings for us? Conſider, my love (you don't want for good nature), your conſent to this match will, in the worſt of times, ſecure a firm and able friend to the family.

Miſs Lin. You deceive yourſelf, indeed, my dear mother: he a friend! I dare believe the firſt proof you will find of his friendſhip, will be his poſitive commands to break off all correſpondence with every relation I have.

Mrs Lin. That's a likely ſtory indeed! Well, child, I muſt ſet your father to work; I find what little weight my arguments have.

Lady Cath. [*without.*] Is Meſtreſs Linnet within?

Mrs Lin. Oh, here comes a protectreſs of yours, Lady Catharine Coldſtream; ſubmit the matter to her: ſhe can have no views, is well read in the ways of the world, and has your intereſt ſincerely at heart.

Enter Lady Catharine Coldſtream.

Lady Cath. How is aw wi you, Meſtreſs Linnet and Meſs? what a dykens is the matter wi Meſs? ſhe ſeems got

got quite i' the dumps: I thought you were aw ready to jump oot o' your ſkens at the bonny proſpec afore you.

Mrs Lin. Indeed, I wiſh your Ladyſhip would take Kitty to taſk; for what I ſay ſignifies nothing.

Lady Cath. Ah! that's aw wrang! What has been the mater, Meſs Kitty? you ken weel enow that children owe an implecit conceſſion to their parents; it is na for bairns to litigate the wull of their friends.

Mrs Lin. Eſpecially, my Lady, in a caſe where their own happineſs is ſo nearly concerned: there is no perſuading her to accept Mr Flint's offers.

Lady Cath. Gad's mercy, Meſs, how comes aw this about? do na you think you ha drawn a braw ticket in the lottery o' life? do na you ken that the mon is laird of aw the lond in the country?

Miſs Lin. Your Ladyſhip knows, Madam, that real happineſs does not depend upon wealth.

Lady Cath. Ah, Meſs, but it is a bonny engredient. Don't you think, Meſtreſs Linnet, the laſs has got ſome other lad in her heed?

Mrs Lin. Your Ladyſhip joins in judgment with me: I have charged her; but ſhe ſtoutly denies it.

Lady Cath. Meſs, you munna be baſhful: an you ſolecit a cure, your phyſician muſt ken the cauſe o' your malady.

Miſs Lin. Your Ladyſhip may believe me, Madam, I have no complaint of that kind.

Lady Cath. The laſs is obſtinate. Meſtreſs Linnet, cannot yourſel gi a gueſs?

Mrs Lin. I can't ſay that I have obſerved—Indeed, ſome time ago, I was inclined to believe Mr Button—

Lady Cath. What! yon tailor in Stall-ſtreet? Ah, Mrs Linnet, you are aw oot in your gueſs: the laſs is twa weel bred, and twa ſaunzy to gi her heart to ſik a burgis as he: Wully Button? nae, he is nae the lad avaw.

Mrs Lin. Major Racket, I once thought—but your Ladyſhip knows his affairs took a different turn.

Lady Cath. Ah! Racket! that's another man's mater: laſſes are apt enow to ſet their hearts upon ſcarlet; a cockade has muckle charms wi our ſex; yes. Well, Meſs, comes the wind fra that corner?

Miſs Lin. Does your Ladyſhip think, to diſlike Mr Flint, it is abſolutely neceſſary to have a prepoſſeſſion for ſomebody elſe?

Lady Cath. Mrs Linnet, an you wull withdraw for a while, perhaps Meſs may throw aff her reſerve, when there's nobody by but ourſelves; a mother, you ken weel, may prove ane too many ſometimes.

Mrs Lin. Your Ladyſhip is moſt exceedingly kind.—D'ye hear, Kitty? mind what her Ladyſhip ſays; do, my dear; and be rul'd by your friends; they are older and wiſer than you. [*Exit.*

Lady Cath. Well, Meſs, what's the cauſe of aw this? what makes you ſo averſe to the wull of your friends?

Miſs Lin. Your Ladyſhip knows Mr Flint.

Lady Cath. Ay, unco weel.

Miſs Lin. Can your Ladyſhip then be at a loſs for a cauſe?

Lady Cath. I canna ſay Mr Flint is quite an Adonis; but wha is it that in matrimony gets aw they wiſh? When I entermarried with Sir Launcelot Coldſtream, I was een ſik a ſprak laſs as yourſel, and the Baronet bordering upon his grand climacteric. You mun ken, Meſs, my father was ſo unſaunzy as to gang out with Charley in the forty-five; after which, his fidelity was rewarded in France by a commiſſion that did na bring him in a bawbee, and a penſion that he never was paid.

Miſs Lin. Infamous ingratitude!

Lady Cath. Ay; but I dinna think they will find ony mare ſik fools i' the North.

Miſs Lin. I hope not.

Lady Cath. After this, you canna think, Meſs, there was mickle ſiller for we poor bairns that were left; ſo that, in troth, I was glad to get an eſtabliſhment; and ne'er heeded the diſparity between my guid mon and myſel.

Miſs Lin. Your Ladyſhip gave great proofs of your prudence; but my affairs are not altogether ſo deſperate.

Lady Cath. Gad's mercy, Meſs! I hope you dinna make any compariſon between Lady Catharine Coldſtream, wha has the beſt blood in Scotland that runs in her veins—

Miſs Lin. I hope your Ladyſhip does not ſuppoſe—

Lady Cath. A lady lineally deſcended fra the great Oſſian himſelf, and allied to aw the illuſtrious houſes abroad and at home—

Miſs Lin. I beg, Madam, your Ladyſhip—

Lady Cath.

Lady Cath. And Kitty Linnet, a little play-actor, wha gets applauded or hiſs'd juſt e'en as the mobility wulls.

Miſs Lin. I am extremely concern'd, that—

Lady Cath. Look'ye, Meſs, I will cut matters ſhort: you ken weel enow, the firſt notice that e'er I took of you was on your acting in Allan Ramſay's play of Patie and Roger; ere ſin I hae been your faſt friend; but an you continue obſtinate, and will na ſuccumb, I ſhall ſtraitway withdraw my protection.

Miſs Lin. I ſhall be extremely unhappy in loſing your Ladyſhip's favour.

Lady Cath. Meſs, that depends entirely on yourſel.

Miſs Lin. Well, Madam, as a proof how highly I rate it, and how deſirous I am of obeying the commands of my parents, it ſha'n't be my fault if their wiſhes are not accompliſhed.

Lady Cath. That's aw wright now, Kitty: gi me a kiſs! you are the prudent laſs that I thought you. Love, Meſs, is a paſtime for boys and green girls; aw ſtuff, fit for nothing but novels and romances; there is nathing ſolid, na ſtability.

Miſs Lin. Madam—

Lady Cath. But to fix your fortune at once, to get above the power o' the world, that, child, is a ſerious concern.

Mrs Lin. [*without*]. With your Ladyſhip's leave—

Lady Cath. You may come in, Mrs Linnet;

Enter Mrs Linnet.

your daughter is brought to a proper ſenſe of her duty, and is ready to coincide with your wiſh.

Mrs Lin. We are infinitely bound to your Ladyſhip! This is lucky, indeed! Mr Flint is now below, Madam, and begs to be admitted.

Lady Cath. Ah! the mon comes in the nick: ſhew him in the inſtant. [*Exit* Mrs Linnet]. Now, Kitty, is your time! do na be ſhy, laſs; but throw out aw your attractions, and fix him that he canna gang back.

Miſs Lin. Madam, I hope to behave—

Lady Cath. Gad's mercy, how the girl trembles and quakes! Come, pluck up a heart, and conſider your aw is at ſtake.

Miſs Lin. I am afraid I ſhall be hardly able to ſay a ſingle—

Lady Cath.

Lady Cath. Suppoſe then you ſing; gi him a ſong; there is nothing moves a love-ſick loon mair than a ſong—[*Noiſe without*]. I hear the lad on the ſtairs.—But let the words be aw melting and ſoft: the Scotch tunes, you ken, are unco pathetic; ſing him the Birks of Endermay, or the Braes of Balendine, or the—

Enter Flint *and* Mrs Linnet.

Maiſter Flint, your ſervant! There, Sir, you ken the laſs of your heart: I have laid for you a pretty ſolid foundation; but as to the edifice, you muſt e'en ereƈt it yourſel. *Exit.*

Flint. Pleaſe your Ladyſhip, I will do my endeavour.—Madam Linnet, I have made bold to bring you a preſent, a ſmall paper of tea in my pocket: you will order the tea-kettle on.

Mrs Lin. Oh, Sir, you need not have—

Flint. I won't put you to any expence. [*Exit* Mrs Lin. Well, Miſs; I underſtand here by my Lady, that ſhe—that is, that you—with reſpeƈt and regard to the—ah! ah! won't you pleaſe to be ſeated? [*Reaches two chairs.*

Miſs Lin. Sir?—My lover ſeems as confuſed as myſelf. [*Aſide.*

Flint. I ſay, Miſs, that as I was a-ſaying, your friends have ſpoke to you all how and about it.

Miſs Lin. About it! about what?

Flint. About this here buſineſs that I come about. Pray, Miſs, are you fond of the country?

Miſs Lin. Of the country!

Flint. Ay: becauſe why, I think it is the moſt prettieſt place for your true lovers to live in; ſomething ſo rural! For my part, I can't ſee what pleaſure pretty Miſſes can take in galloping to plays, and to balls, and ſuch expenſive vagaries; there is ten times more paſtime in fetching walks in the fields, in plucking of daiſies—

Miſs Lin. Haymaking, feeding the poultry, and milking the cows.

Flint. Right, Miſs.

Miſs Lin. It muſt be own'd they are pretty employments for ladies.

Flint. Yes; for my mother uſed to ſay, who, between ourſelves, was a notable houſewife,

Fools

Fools that are idle,
May live to bite the bridle.

Miſs Lin. What a happineſs to have been bred under ſo prudent a parent!

Flint. Ay, Miſs, you will have reaſon to ſay ſo; her maxims have put many a pound into my pocket.

Miſs Lin. How does that concern me?

Flint. Becauſe why, as the ſaying is,

Tho' I was the maker,
You may be the partaker.

Miſs Lin. Sir, you are very obliging.

Flint. I can tell you, ſuch offers are not every day to be met with: only think, Miſs, to have victuals and drink conſtantly found you, without coſt or care on your ſide! eſpecially now meat is ſo dear.

Miſs Lin. Conſiderations by no means to be ſlighted.

Flint. Moreover, that you may live and appear like my wife, I fully intend to keep you a coach.

Miſs Lin. Indeed!

Flint. Yes; and you ſhall command the horſes whenever you pleaſe, unleſs during the harveſt, and when they are employed in plowing and carting; becauſe the main chance muſt be minded, you know.

Miſs Lin. True, true.

Flint. Though I don't think you will be vaſtly fond of coaching about; for why, we are off of the turnpike, and the ſloughs are deadly deep about we.

Miſs Lin. What, you intend to reſide in the country?

Flint. Without doubt; for then, you know, Miſs, I ſhall be ſure to have you all to myſelf.

Miſs Lin. An affectianate motive!—But even in this happy ſtate, where the moſt perfect union prevails, ſome ſolitary hours will intrude, and the time, now and then, hang heavy on our hands.

Flint. What, in the country, my dear Miſs? not a minute: you will find all paſtime and jollity there; for what with minding the dairy, dunning the tenants, preſerving and pickling, nurſing the children, ſcolding the ſervants, mending and making, roaſting, boiling, and baking, you won't have a moment to ſpare; you will be merry and happy as the days they are long.

Miſs Lin.

Miſs Lin. I am afraid the days will be hardly long enough to execute ſo extenſive a plan of enjoyment.

Flint. Never you fear! I am told, Miſs, that you write an exceeding good hand

Miſs Lin. Pretty well, I believe.

Flint. Then, Miſs, there is more pleaſure in ſtore; for you may employ any leiſure time that you have in being my clerk, as a juſtice of peace: You ſhall ſhare ſixpence out of every warrant, to buy you any little thing that you want.

Miſs Lin. That's finely imagined!—As your enjoyments are chiefly domeſtic, I preſume you have contrived to make home as convenient as can be: you have, Sir, good gardens, no doubt!

Flint. Gardens? ay, ay: why, before the great parlour window there grows a couple of yews, as tall as a maſt, and as thick as a ſteeple; and the boughs caſt ſo delightful a ſhade, that you can't ſee your hand in any part of the room.

Miſs Lin. A moſt delicate gloom!

Flint. And then there conſtantly rooſts in the trees a curious couple of owls; which I won't ſuffer our folks to diſturb, as they make ſo rural a noiſe in the night—

Miſs Lin. A moſt charming duet!

Flint. And beſides, Miſs, they pay for their lodgings, as they are counted very good mouſers, you know.

Miſs Lin. True; but within doors, your manſion is capacious, and—

Flint. Capacious? yes, yes; capacious enough: you may ſtretch your legs without croſſing the threſhold: why, we go up and down ſtairs to every room of the houſe. To be ſure, at preſent, it is a little out of repair; not that it rains in (where the caſements are whole) at above five or ſix places, at preſent.

Miſs Lin. Your proſpects are pleaſing?

Flint. From off the top of the leads; for why, I have boarded up moſt of the windows, in order to ſave paying the tax. But to my thinking, our bed-chamber, Miſs, is the moſt pleaſanteſt place in the houſe.

Miſs Lin. Oh, Sir, you are very polite.

Flint. No, Miſs, it is not for that; but you muſt know, Miſs, that there is a large bow-window facing the eaſt, that

that does finely for drying of herbs: it is hung round with hatchments of all the folks that have died in the family; and then the pigeon-houſe is over our heads.

Miſs Lin. The pigeon-houſe?

Flint. Yes; and there, every morning, we ſhall be wak'd by day-break with their murmuring, cooing, and courting, that will make it as fine as can be.

Miſs Lin. Raviſhing! Well, Sir, it muſt be confeſs'd, you have given me a moſt bewitching picture of paſtoral life: your place is a perfect Arcadia! But I am afraid half the charms are deriv'd from the painter's flattering pencil.

Flint. Not heighten'd a bit, as yourſelf ſhall be judge. And then, as to company, Miſs, you may have plenty of that when you will; for we have as pretty a neighbourhood as a body can wiſh.

Miſs Lin. Really?

Flint. There is the widow Kilderkin, that keeps the Adam and Eve at the end of the town, quite an agreeable body! indeed the death of her huſband has drove the poor woman to tipple a bit; Farmer Dobbin's daughters, and Dr Surplice, our curate, and wife, a vaſt converſible woman, if ſhe was not altogether ſo deaf.

Miſs Lin. A very ſociable ſet! Why, Sir, placed in this Paradiſe, there is nothing left you to wiſh.

Flint. Yes, Miſs, but there is.

Miſs Lin. Ay! what can that be?

Flint. The very ſame that our grandfather had; to have a beautiful Eve by my ſide. Could I lead the lovely Linnet nothing loath to that bower—

Miſs Lin. Oh, exceſs of gallantry!

Flint. Would her ſweet breath but deign to kindle, and blow up my hopes!

Miſs Lin. Oh, Mr Flint! I muſt not ſuffer this, for your ſake; a perſon of your importance and rank—

Flint. A young lady, Miſs, of your great merit and beauty—

Miſs Lin. A gentleman ſo accompliſh'd and rich—

Flint. Whoſe perfections are not only the talk of the Bath, but of Briſtol, and the whole country round—

Miſs Lin. Oh, Mr Flint, this is too much!

Flint. Her goodneſs, her grace, her duty, her decency, her wiſdom and wit, her ſhape, ſlimneſs and ſize, with her lovely black eyes, ſo elegant, engaging, ſo modeſt, ſo prudent,

prudent, ſo pious, and, if I am rightly inform'd, poſſeſſed of a ſweet pretty pipe—

Miſs Lin. This is ſuch a profuſion—

Flint. Permit me, Miſs, to ſolicit a ſpeciment of your delicate talents.

Miſs Lin. Why, Sir, as your extravagant compliments have left me nothing to ſay, I think the beſt thing I can do is to ſing.

SONG.

The ſmiling morn, the breathing ſpring,
Invites the tuneful birds to ſing;
And as they warble from each ſpray,
Love melts the univerſal lay, &c.

Flint. Enchanting! raviſhing ſounds! not the Nine Muſes themſelves, nor Mrs Baddeley, is equal to you.

Miſs Lin. Oh, fy!

Flint. May I flatter myſelf that the words of the ſong were directed to me?

Miſs Lin. Should I make ſuch a confeſſion, I ſhould ill deſerve the character you have been pleas'd to beſtow.

Enter Lady Catharine Coldſtream.

Lady Cath. Come, come, Maiſter Flint, I'll ſet your hert at reſt in the inſtant: you ken weel enow, laſſes are apt to be modeſt and ſhy; then take her anſwer fra me: prepare the miniſter and aw the reſt of the tackle, and you will find us ready to gang to the kirk.

Flint. Miſs, may I rely on what her Ladyſhip ſays?

Lady Cath. Gad's mercy! I think the mon is bewitch'd! he wonna take a woman of quality's word for ſik a trifling thing as a wife.

Flint. Your Ladyſhip will impute it all to my fears.—Then I will ſtraight ſet about getting the needful.

Lady Cath. Gang your gait as faſt as you liſt.

Flint. Lord bleſs us! I had like to have forgot—I have, pleaſe your Ladyſhip, put up here in a purſe a few preſents, that if Miſs would but deign to accept—

Lady Cath. Ah! that's aw wright; quite in the order of things: as matters now ſtand, there is no harm in her accepting of preſents fra you, Maiſter Flint; you may produce.

Flint.

Flint. Here is a Porto-Bello pocket-piece of Admiral Varnon, with his image a one ſide, and ſix men of war only, all in full ſail on the other—

Lady Cath. That's a curious medallion!

Flint. And here is a half-crown of Queen Anne's, as freſh as when it came out from the Mint: I have refuſed two and eight-pence for it a hundred times.

Lady Cath. Yes, yes; it is in very fine preſervation.

Flint. In this here paper, there are two mourning-rings; that, which my aunt Bothere'm left me, might ſerve very well, I ſhould think, for the approaching happy occaſion.

Lady Cath. How! a mourning—

Flint. Becauſe why, the motto's ſo pat;

True, till death
Shall ſtop my breath.

Lady Cath. Ay, ay; that contains mickle morality, Meſs.

Flint. And here is, fourthly, a ſilver coral and bells, with only a bit broke off the coral when I was cutting my grinders: this was given me by my godfather Slingſby; and I hope will be in uſe again before the year comes about.

Lady Cath. Na doubt, na doubt! Leave that matter to us; I warrant we impede the Flint family from fawing into oblivion.

Flint. I hope ſo: I ſhould be glad to have a ſon of my own, if ſo be, but to leave him my fortune; becauſe why, at preſent there is no mortal that I care a farthing about.

Lady Cath. Quite a philoſopher. Then diſpatch, Maiſter Flint, diſpatch! for you ken, at your time of life, you hanna a moment to loſe.

Flint. True, true. Your Ladyſhip's entirely devoted—Miſs, I am your moſt affectionate ſlave! [*Exit.*

Lady Cath. A ſaunzy lad, this Maiſter Flint: you ſee, Meſs, he has a meaning in aw he does.

Miſs Lin. Might I be permitted to alter your Ladyſhip's words, I ſhould rather ſay, *meanneſs*.

Lady Cath. It is na mickle matter what the mon is at preſent; wi a little management, you may mould him into any form that you liſt.

Miſs Lin. I am afraid he is not made of ſuch pliant materials: but, however, I have too far advanced to retire;

the die is caſt! I have no chance now, unleſs my Corydon ſhould happen to alter his mind.

Lady Cath. Na, Meſs; there is na danger in that: you may ken the treaty is concluded under my mediation; an he ſhould dare to draw back, Lady Catharine Coldſtream would find means to puniſh his perfidy.—Come away, Meſs! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

The Bear Inn.

Sir Chriſtopher Cripple, Sour-Crout, de Jarſey, Major Rackett, *and* Poultice, *diſcovered ſitting at a table.*

Sir Chr. WE muſt take care that Flint does not ſurpriſe us; for the ſcoundrel is very ſuſpicious.

Rack. There is no danger of that; I lodged him ſafely at Linnet's: Button ſtands centry at the end of the ſtreet; ſo that we ſhall be inſtantly appriſed of every motion he makes.

Poul. Well managed, my Major!

Sir Chr. Yes, yes; the cunning young dog knows very well what he is about.

Sour-Cr. Upon my vord, Major Racket has very fine diſpoſition to make a figure at de head of de army; five or ſix German campaigns will—Ah, dat is de beſt ſchool in de vorld for make a de var.

Sir Chr. Five or ſix German campaigns!

Sour-Cr. Ay, Chevalier; vat you ſay to dat?

Sir Chr. O Mynheer! nothing at all: a German war, for aught I know, may be a very good ſchool; but it is a damned expenſive education for us.

De Jar. C'eſt vrai, Chevalier; dat is all true; ce pay la, dat place is de grave for de Frenchman and de fine Engliſh guinea.

Sir Chr. True, Monſieur; but our guineas are rather worſe off than your men, for they ſtand no chance of riſing again.

De Jar. Ha, ha, ha! dat is very vell! le Chevalier have

have beaucoup d'eſprit, great deal of wit, ma foi.

Rack. I think the Knight is in luck. But don't let us loſe ſight of our ſubject! You, gentlemen, are all prepar'd, perfect in the ſeveral parts you are to play?

All. Ay, ay.

Rack. You, Mynheer Sour-Crout?

Sour-Cr. I underſtand: I will pique his honour; de pride of his famille.

Rack. Right. Poultice—

Poul. I will alarm him on the ſide of his health.

Sir Chr. Next to his money, the thing in the world he moſt minds.

Rack. You, de Jarſey, and Button, will employ all your eloquence on the prudential ſide of the—Oh, dear Jarſey! here is a draught for the pipe of port that I promis'd.

De Jar. Dat is right.

Rack. The only receipt to get bawds, boroughs, or Frenchmen. [*Aſide.*]—Oh, here Billy comes.

Enter Button.

Well, Billy! what news?

But. I am vaſt afraid all matters are concluded at laſt.

Rack. Ay! prithee why ſo?

But. Becauſe why, in ten minutes after you went, out bolted the Squire, and hurry-ſcurried away to layer Latti-tat's, who, you know, arreſts his tenants, and does all his concarns.

Rack. True: well—

But. I ſuppoſe to gi' him orders about drawing up the writings.

Sir Chr. Not unlikely. But you think Flint will come to the club?

But. There is no manner of doubt of it; becauſe why, he holloo'd to me from over the way, "What, Billy, I "ſuppoſe you are bound to the Bear: Well, boy, I ſhall "be hard at your heels;" and he ſeem'd in prodigious vaſt ſpirits.

Rack. I am miſtaken if we don't lower them a little.—Well, gentlemen, the time of action draws near. Knight, we muſt decamp.

Sir Chr. When you will.

Rack.

Rack. I think, Sir Chriſtopher, you lodge in the ſame houſe with the Linnets?

Sir Chr. Juſt over their heads.

Rack. Then thither we'll go. Ten to one, if our plot operates as I expect, the hero will return to their houſe.

Sir Chr. Moſt likely.

Rack. We are come to a criſis, and the cataſtrophe of our piece can't be very far off.

Sir Chr. I wiſh, like other plays, it don't end in a marriage.

Rack. Then ſhall I be moſt confoundedly bit. But come, Knight!

Sir Chr. Rot you! I do as faſt as I can.—I can't think, Rackett, what the deuce makes thee ſo warm in this buſineſs; there is certainly ſomething at the bottom that I don't comprehend. But do, Major, have pity on the poor girl: upon my ſoul, ſhe is a ſweet little Syren! ſo innocent and—

Rack. Pho, pho! don't be abſurd! I thought that matter had been fully explain'd. This, Knight, is no time to look back; but ſuppoſe now I ſhould have a little miſchief in hand—

Sir Chr. How! of what kind?

Rack. "Be innocent of the knowledge, deareſt Knight, "till done, and then applaud the deed!"

Sir Chr. It is very extraordinary, Major Rackett, if you are determined to make the devil a viſit, that you can't pay it alone; or, if you muſt have company, what a pox makes you think of fixing on me?

Rack. Hey-day! ha, ha, ha! What, in the vapours again? we muſt have ſome more punch.

Sir Chr. You are miſtaken; that won't have power to change the ſtate of my mind: my reſolves are too firm—

Rack. And who wiſhes to break them? I only aſk your aſſiſtance to-night; and your reformation, you recollect, don't begin till to-morrow.

Sir Chr. That's true, indeed: but no human power ſhall prevail on me to put it off any longer than to-morrow.

Rack. Or the next day at furtheſt.

Sir Chr. May I be damn'd if I do!

[*Exeunt* Racket *and* Sir Chriſtopher.

Poul. Come, lads, light your pipes! Which of us ſhall be firſt to attack? Billy—

But.

But. Won't it be rather too bold for me to begin?

Poul. Then let us leave it to chance.—Huſh! I hear him lumbering in! compoſe your looks; let his reception be ſolemn and grave.

But. Leave that chair for him.

Enter Flint.

Flint. How fares it, my lads?—Well, boys, matters are ſettled, at laſt; the little Kate has complied, and to-morrow is fix'd for the day.

Poul. You have ſettled it then?

Flint. As firm as a rock.

Poul. So you can't retreat, if you would?

Flint. Retreat! I have no ſuch deſign.

Poul. You ha'n't?

Flint. No, to be ſure, you great fool! What the deuce would Poultice be at?

Poul. Nay then, neighbours, what we have been ſaying will juſt ſignify nothing.

Flint. Saying! why, you have not heard—that is, nobody—

Poul. No, nothing very material—only—but as the matter is carried ſo far—

Flint. So far? why, I hope you have not found out any flaw! Kitty has not—

Poul. No, no; nothing of that; no, upon my word! I believe, a very modeſt, prudent, good girl, neighbour.

All. No manner of doubt.

Flint. Well then? but what a plague is the meaning of this? you all ſit as ſilent and glum—why, can't you ſpeak out, with a pox?

Poul. Why, Squire, as we are all your fix'd friends, we have been canvaſſing this matter amongſt us.

Flint. You have?

Poul. Marriage, you know very well, is no trifling affair; too much caution and care can't be us'd.

Flint. That I firmly believe, which has made me defer it ſo long.

Poul. Pray lend me your hand? how is the ſtate of your health? do you find yourſelf hearty and ſtrong?

Flint. I think ſo; that is, I—you ha'n't obſerv'd any bad ſymptoms of late?

Poul. No; but you us'd to have pains flying about you.

Flint.

Flint. Formerly; but ſince I have fix'd my gout to a fit, they are gone: that, indeed, lays me up for four or five months in a year.

Poul. A pretty long ſpell: and, in ſuch a caſe, now, do you think that marriage—

Flint. The moſt beſt receipt in the world: why, that, man, was one of my motives: wives, you know, are allow'd to make very good nurſes.

Poul. That, indeed—

Flint. Ay; and then they are always at hand; and, beſides, they don't coſt one a farthing.

Poul. True, true. Why, you look very jolly, and freſh; does not he?

All. Exceedingly.

Poul. Yet he can't be leſs than—let me ſee! Wasn't you under old Syntax at Wells?

Flint. He died the year I left ſchool.

Poul. That muſt be a good forty years ſince.

Flint. Come ſheep-ſhearing next.

Poul. Then, Squire, you are hard upon ſixty.

Flint. Not far away, Mr Poultice.

Poul. And Miſs Linnet—ſixteen: you are a bold man! Not but there are inſtances, where men have ſurvived many years ſuch diſproportionate marriages as theſe.

Flint. Surviv'd! and why ſhould they not?

Poul. But then their ſtamina muſt be prodigiouſly ſtrong.

Flint. Stamina!

Poul. Let us ſee, Button! there was Dr Dotage, that married the Devonſhire girl; he had a matter of—

But. No, no; he dropped off in ſix months.

Poul. True, true; I had forgot.

Flint. Lord have mercy!

But. Indeed, an old maſter of mine, Sir Harry O'Tuff, is alive, and walks about to this day.

Flint. Hey!

Poul. But you forget where Sir Harry was born, and how ſoon his lady eloped.

But. In the honey-moon; with Captain Pike, of the guards: I mind it full well.

Poul. That, indeed, alters the caſe.

Flint. Well, but, Billy, you are not ſerious in this? you don't think there is any danger of death?

But. As to the matter of death, the Doctor knows better than

than I, becauſe why, that lies in his way: but I ſhall never forget Colonel Crazy, one of the beſt cuſtomers that ever I had; I never think of him without dropping a tear.

Flint. Why? what was the matter with him?

But. Married Lady Barbary Bonnie, as it might be about midnight on Monday—

Flint. Well?

But. But never more ſaw the ſweet face of the ſun.

Flint. What! did he die?

But. Within an hour after throwing the ſtocking.

Flint. Good Lord! that was dreadful indeed! Of what age might he be!

But. About your time of life.

Flint. That is vaſtly alarming. Lord bleſs me, Bill, I am all of a tremble!

But. Ay, truly, it behoves your Honour to conſider what you are about.

Flint. True.

But. Then, what a world of money muſt go! running forwards and backwards to town, and jaunting to ſee all the fine ſights in the place—

Flint. I ſha'n't take her to many of them: perhaps I may ſhew her the Parliament-houſe, the plays, and Boodles, and bedlam, and my Lord Mayor, and the lions.

But. And then the vaſt heap of fine cloaths you muſt make—

Flint. What occaſion for that?

But. As you ar'n't known, there is no doing without; becauſe why, every body paſſes there for what they appears.

Flint. Right, Billy; but I believe I have found out a way to do that pretty cheap.

But. Which way may be that?

Flint. You have ſeen the miniſter that's come down to tack us together—

But. I have: is he a fine man in the pulpit?

Flint. He don't care much to meddle with that; but he is a prodigious patriot, and a great politician to boot.

But. Indeed?

Flint. And he has left behind him, at Paris, a choice collection of curious rich cloaths, which he has promis'd to ſell me a pennorth.

Poul. Pho! what Billy talks of are trifles to the evils you are to expect: to have a young girl break in upon all your

your old ways; your afternoon's nap interrupted, and perhaps not ſuffer'd to take your pipe of a night—

Flint. No?

Poul. All your former friends forbidden your houſe—

Flint. The fewer comes in, the leſs will go out: I ſha'n't be very ſorry for that.

Poul. To make room for her own numerous clan—

Flint. Not a ſoul of them ſhall enter the doors.

Poul. A brood of babes at your board, whoſe fathers ſhe herſelf won't find it eaſy to name—

Flint. To prevent that, I'll lock her up in a room.

Poul. The King's Bench will break open the door.

Flint. Then I'll turn her out of the houſe.

Poul. Then her debts will throw you into gaol.

Flint. Who told you ſo?

Poul. A dozen of proctors.

Flint. Then I will hang myſelf out of the way.

Poul. So ſhe will become poſſeſſed of her jointure, and her creditors foreclooſe your eſtate.

Flint. What a miſerable poor toad is a huſband, whoſe misfortunes not even death can relieve!

But. Think of that, Squire, before it be too late.

Flint. Well, but, friends, neighbours, what the deuce can I do? Are you all of a mind?

De Jar. All, all; dere is no queſtion at all. What, a garſon of your antient famille, to take up with a pauvre petite burgoiſe, a?

Flint. Does that never happen in France?

De Jar. Never, but when Monſieur de Baron is very great beggar, and de bourgoiſe has damn'd deal de guinea.

Poul. That is none of our caſe.

Flint. No, no.—Mynheer, do your people never make up ſuch matches?

Sour-Cr. Never, never: what! a German diſhonour his ſtock! Why, Meſter Flint, ſhould Miſtreſs Linnet bring you de children for de ten generations to come, they could not be choſe de Canons de Straſbourg.

Flint. No?

Poul. So, Squire, take it which way you will, what dreadful danger you run!

Flint. I do.

Poul. Loſs of friends—

But. Pipe and afternoon's nap—

Sour-Cr.

Sour-Cr. Your famille gone to de dogs—

De Jar. Your peace of mind to de devil—

Poul. Your health—

But. Your wealth—

Poul. Plate, money, and manors—

All. Your—

Flint. Enough, dear neighbours, enough! I feel it, I feel it too well! Lord have mercy, what a miſerable ſcrape am I in! And here too, not an hour ago, it coſt me the Lord knows what in making her preſents.

Poul. Never mind that; you had better part with half you are worth in the world.

Flint. True, true.—Well then, I'll go and break off all matters this minute.

Poul. The wiſeſt thing you can do.

But. The ſooner the better.

Flint. No doubt, no doubt in the—And yet, Button, ſhe is a vaſt pretty girl: I ſhould be heartily ſorry to loſe her. Doſt think one could not get her on eaſier terms than on marriage?

But. It is but trying, however.

Flint. To tell truth, Billy, I have always had that in my head; and, at all events, I have thought of a project that will anſwer my purpoſe.

But. Ay, Squire! what is it?

Flint. No matter.—And, do you hear, Billy? ſhould I get her conſent, if you will take her off my hands, and marry her when I begin to grow tired, I'll ſettle ten pounds a-year upon you, for both your lives.

But. Without paying the taxes?

Flint. That matter we will talk of hereafter. [*Exit.*

Poul. So, ſo! we have ſettled this buſineſs, however.

But. No more thoughts of his taking a wife.

Poul. He would ſooner be tied to a gibbet. But, Billy, ſtep after him (they will let you in at Sir Chriſtopher Cripple's), and bring us, Bill, a faithful account.

But. I will, I will. But where ſhall you be?

Poul. Above, in the Phœnix; we won't ſtir out of the houſe. But be very exact!

But. Never fear. [*Exeunt.*

A Chamber.

Miſs Linnet *alone.*

Miſs Lin. Heigh-ho! what a ſacrifice am I going to make! but it is the will of thoſe who have a right to all my obedience; and to that I will ſubmit.—[*Loud knocking at the door*]. Bleſs me! who can that be at this time of night?—Our friends may err; and projects, the moſt prudentially pointed, may miſs of their aim: but age and experience demand reſpect and attention, and the undoubted kindneſs of our parents' deſigns claims, on our part, at leaſt a grateful and ready compliance.

Enter Nancy.

Miſs Lin. Nancy, who was that at the door?

Nancy. Mr Flint, Miſs, begs the favour of ſpeaking five words to you.

Miſs Lin. I was in hopes to have had this night at leaſt to myſelf.—Where is my mother?

Nancy. In the next room, with Lady Catharine, conſulting about your cloaths for the morning.

Miſs Lin. He is here.—Very well; you may go.

[*Exit* Nancy.

Enter Flint.

Flint. She is alone, as I wiſhed.—Miſs, I beg pardon for intruding at this time of night: but—

Miſs Lin. Sir!

Flint. You can't wonder that I deſire to enjoy your good company every minute I can.

Miſs Lin. Thoſe minutes a ſhort ſpace will place, Mr Flint, in your power: if till then you had permitted me to—

Flint. Right. But, to ſay truth, I wanted to have a little ſerus talk with you of how and about it. I think, Miſs, you agree, if we marry, to go off to the country directly.

Miſs Lin. If we marry? is it then a matter of doubt?

Flint. Why, I will tell you, Miſs: with regard to myſelf, you know, I am one of the moſt ancienteſt families in all the country round—

Miſs Lin. Without doubt.

Flint.

Flint. And as to money and lands, in theſe parts, I believe, few people can match me.

Miſs Lin. Perhaps not.

Flint. And as to yourſelf (I don't ſpeak in a diſparaging way), your friends are low folks, and your fortune juſt nothing at all.

Miſs Lin. True, Sir: but this is no new diſcovery; you have known this—

Flint. Hear me out. Now, as I bring all theſe good things on my ſide, and you have nothing to give me in return but your love, I ought to be pretty ſure of the poſſeſſion of that.

Miſs Lin. I hope the properly diſcharging all the duties of that condition, which I am ſhortly to owe to your favour, will give you convincing proofs of my gratitude.

Flint. Your gratitude, Miſs! but we talk of your love! and of that I muſt have plain and poſitive proofs.

Miſs Lin. Proofs! of what kind?

Flint. To ſteal away directly with me to my lodgings—

Miſs Lin. Your lodgings!

Flint. There paſs the night; and in the morning, the very minute we riſe, we will march away to the abbey.

Miſs Lin. Sir!

Flint. In ſhort, Miſs, I muſt have this token of your love, or not a ſyllable more of the marriage.

Miſs Lin. Give me patience!

Flint. Come, Miſs! we have not a moment to loſe; the coaſt is clear: ſhould ſomebody come, you will put it out of my power to do what I deſign.

Miſs Lin. Power? Hands off, Mr Flint! Power? I promiſe you, Sir, you ſhall never have me in your power!

Flint. Hear, Miſs!

Miſs Lin. Deſpicable wretch! From what part of my character could your vanity derive a hope that I would ſubmit to your infamous purpoſe?

Flint. Don't be in a—

Miſs Lin. To put principle out of the queſtion, not a creature that had the leaſt tincture of pride could fall a victim to ſuch a contemptible—

Flint. Why, but, Miſs—

Miſs Lin. It is true, in compliance with the earneſt requeſt of my friends, I had conſented to ſacrifice my peace to

to their pleaſure; and, though reluctant, would have given you my hand.

Flint. Vaſtly well!

Miſs Lin. What motive, but obedience to them, could I have had in forming an union with you? Did you preſume I was ſtruck with your perſonal merit, or think the ſordidneſs of your mind and manners would tempt me?

Flint. Really, Miſs, this is carrying—

Miſs Lin. You have wealth, I confeſs; but where could have been the advantage to me? As a reward for becoming your drudge, I might perhaps have received a ſcanty ſubſiſtence; for I could hardly ſuppoſe you would grant the free uſe of that to your wife, which your meanneſs had denied to yourſelf.

Flint. So, ſo, ſo! By and bye ſhe will alarm the whole houſe!

Miſs Lin. The whole houſe? the whole town ſhall be told! Sure, the greateſt misfortune that poverty brings in its train, is the ſubjecting us to the inſults of wretches like this, who have no other merit than what their riches beſtow on them.

Flint. What a damnable vixen!

Miſs Lin. Go, Sir! leave the houſe! I am aſhamed you have had the power to move me; and never more let me be ſhocked with your ſight?

Enter Lady Catharine *and* Mrs Linnet.

Lady Cath. How's aw wi you within?—Gad's mercy, what's the mater wi Meſs? I well hope, Maiſter Flint, it is nae you wha ha ſet her a wailing.

Mrs Lin. Kitty, my love!

Miſs Lin. A modeſt propoſal of that gentleman's making—

Lady Cath. Of what kind?

Miſs Lin. Only this moment to quit my father and you, and take up my lodging with him.

Lady Cath. To-night! aw that is quite out of the order of things; that is ne'er done, Maiſter Flint, till after the ceremony of the nuptials is ſaid.

Flint. No? then, I can tell your Ladyſhip, it will never be done.

Lady Cath. How!

Enter

Enter Major Racket, Sir Chriſtopher Cripple, *and* Button.

Sir Chr. We beg pardon for taking the liberty to come in, Mrs Linnet; but we are afraid ſome accident might have happened to Miſs.

Mrs Lin. There has, Sir.

Rack. Of what kind?

Mrs Lin. That worthy gentleman, under pretence of friendſhip to us, and honourable views to my daughter, has hatched a treacherous deſign inevitably to ruin my child.

Sir Chr. What, he? Flint?

Mrs Lin. Even he.

Sir Chr. An impudent ſon of a—Billy, lead me up, that I may take a peep at the puppy.—Your ſervant, young gentleman! what, is it true that we hear? A ſweet ſwain this, to tempt a virgin to ſin! Why, Old Nick has made a miſtake here—he uſed to be more expert in his angling—for what female on earth can be got to catch at this bait?

Lady Cath. Haud, haud you, Sir Chriſtopher Cripple! let Maiſter Flint and I have a ſhort conference upon the occaſion.—I find, Maiſter Flint, you ha made a little miſtake; but marriage will ſet aw matters right i' the inſtant: I ſuppoſe you perſevere to gang wi Meſs to kirk in the morning.

Flint. No, Madam; nor the evening neither.

Lady Cath. Mercy a Gad! what, do you refuſe to ratify the preliminaries?

Flint. I don't ſay that neither.

Sir Chr. Then name the time in which you will fulfil them: a week?

Lady Cath. A fortnight?

Mrs Lin. A month?

Flint. I won't be bound to no time.

Rack. A raſcally evaſion of his, to avoid an action at law.

Sir Chr. But, perhaps, he may be diſappointed in that.

Lady Cath. Well, but, Maiſter Flint, are you willing to make Meſs a pecuniary acknowledgment for the damage?

Flint. I have done her no damage, and I'll make no reparation.

Rack.

Rack. Twelve honeſt men of your country may happen to differ in judgment.

Flint. Let her try, if ſhe will.

Sir Chr. And I promiſe you ſhe ſha'n't be to ſeek for the means.

Lady Catb. If you be nae afraid o' the laws, ha you nae ſenſe o' ſhame?

Rack. He ſenſe of ſhame?

Lady Catb. Gad's wull, it ſha' cum to the proof: you mun ken, gued folk, at Edinburgh, laiſt winter, I got acquainted with Maiſter Foote, the play actor: I wull get him to bring the filthy loon on the ſtage—

Sir Chr. And expoſe him to the contempt of the world; he richly deſerves it.

Flint. Ay, he may write, you may rail, and the people may hiſs, and what care I? I have that at home that will keep up my ſpirits.

Lady Catb. At hame?

Rack. The wretch means his money.

Flint. And what better friend can any man have? tell me the place where its influence fails? aſk that gentleman how he got his cockade. Money! I know its worth, and therefore can't too carefully keep it: at this very inſtant I have a proof of its value; it enables me to laugh at that ſqueamiſh impertinent girl, and diſpiſe the weak efforts of your impotent malice: call me forth to your courts when you pleaſe; that will procure me able defenders, and good witneſſes too, if they are wanted. [*Exit.*

Sir Chr. Now there's a fellow that will never reform!

Rack. You had better let him alone; it is in vain to expect juſtice or honour from him: what a moſt contemptible cur is a miſer!

Sir Chr. Ten thouſand times worſe than a highwayman: that poor devil only pilfers from Peter or Paul, and the money is ſcattered as ſoon as received; but the wretch that accumulates for the ſake of ſecreting, annihilates what was intended for the uſe of the world, and is a robber of the whole human race.

Rack. And of himſelf into the bargain.

But. For all the world like a magpie; he ſteals for the mere pleaſure of hiding.

Rack. Well obſerved, little Bill.

But. Why, he wanted to bring me into his plot; yes; he

he made propoſals for me to marry Miſs after his purpoſe was ſerved—

Sir Chr. How!

But. But he was out in his man! let him give his caſt cloaths to his coachman; Billy Button can afford a new ſuit of his own.

Rack. I don't doubt it at all.

But. Fellow! I am almoſt reſolved never to ſet another ſtitch for him as long as I live.

Sir Chr. Right, Button, right. But where is Miſs Kitty?—Come hither, my chicken! Faith, I am heartily glad you are rid of this ſcoundrel; and if ſuch a crippled old fellow as I was worthy your notice—But, hold, Kate! there is another chap I muſt guard you againſt—

Miſs Lin. Another, Sir! who?

Sir Chr. Why, this gentleman.

Rack. Me?

Sir Chr. Ay, you: come, come, Major, don't think you can impoſe upon a cunning old ſportſman like me.

Rack. Upon my ſoul, Sir Chriſtopher, you make me bluſh.

Sir Chr. Oh, you are deviliſh modeſt, I know! But to come to the trial at once: I have ſome reaſon to believe, Major, you are fond of this girl; and, that her want of fortune mayn't plead your excuſe, I don't think I can better begin my plan of reforming than by a compliment paid to her virtue: then, take her, and with her two thouſand guineas in hand.

Mrs Lin. How, Sir!

Sir Chr. And expect another good ſpell, when Monſieur le Fevre ſets me free from the gout.

But. Pleaſe your Worſhip, I'll accept her with half—

Lady Cath. Gi me leave, Sir Chriſtopher, to throw in the wedow's mite on the happy occaſion: the bride's garment, and her dinner, ſhall be furniſhed by me.

Sir Chr. Cock-a-leeky ſoup!

Lady Cath. Sheep's head ſinged, and haggies in plenty.

Sir Chr. Well ſaid, Lady Catharine.

Miſs Lin. How, Sir, ſhall I acknowledge this goodneſs?

Sir Chr. By ſaying nothing about it.—Well, Sir! we wait your anſwer.

Rack. I think the lady might firſt be conſulted: I ſhould

be ſorry a freſh proſecution ſhould follow ſo faſt on the heels of the—

Sir Chr. Come, come, no trifling! your reſolution at once.

Rack. I receive, then, your offer with pleaſure.

Sir Chr. Miſs!

Miſs Lin. Sir, there is a little account to be firſt ſettled between this gentleman and an old unhappy acquaintance of mine.

Sir Chr. Who?

Miſs Lin. The Major can gueſs—the unhappy Miſs Prim.

Sir Chr. You ſee, Major, your old ſins are riſing in judgment.

Rack. I believe, Madam, I can ſatisfy that.

Miſs Lin. I ſha'n't give you the trouble.—But firſt, let me return you all my moſt grateful thanks for your kind intentions towards me: I know your generous motives, and feel their value, I hope, as I ought; but might I be permitted to chuſe, I beg to remain in the ſtation I am: my little talents have hitherto received the public protection, nor, whilſt I continue to deſerve, am I the leaſt afraid of loſing, my patrons. [*Exeunt.*

THE

THE

DEVIL UPON TWO STICKS;

A COMEDY,

IN

THREE ACTS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Devil, —	—	Mr Foote.
Sir Thomas Maxwell,	—	Mr Gardner.
Invoice, —	Doctors.	Mr Du-Bellamy.
Sligo, —		Mr Moody.
Broadrim, —		Mr Thompson.
Oſafafras, —		Mr Egan.
Fingerfee, —		Mr Hutton.
Camphire, —		Mr Fearon.
Calomel, —		Mr Lings.
Diachylon, —		Mr Lewis.
Habakkuk, —		Mr Pierce.
Dr Laſt, —	—	Mr Weston.
Johnny Macpherſon,	—	Mr Hamilton.
Julep, —	—	Mr Palmer.
Apozem, —	—	Mr Castle.
Forceps, —	—	Mr Stephens.
Secretary, —	—	Mr Loyd.
Printers Devil, —	—	Mr Jacobs.
Margaret, —	—	Mrs Gardner.
Harriet, —	—	Mrs Jewell.

Servants, &c.

ACT I.

ACT I.

A Room.

Enter Sir Thomas Maxwell *and* Margaret.

Sir Tho. WHY, the woman is mad! theſe curſed newspaper patriots have ſhatter'd her brains! nothing leſs than a ſenator of ſeven years ſtanding can conceive what ſhe means.

Marg. Why, Sir Thomas, my converſation is neither deficient in order, preciſion, or dignity.

Sir Tho. Dignity! and what occaſion for dignity in the common concerns of my houſe? why the deuce can't you converſe like the reſt of the world? If you want money to pay off my bills, you move me for further ſupplies; if I turn away a ſervant, you condemn me for ſo often changing my miniſtry; and becauſe I lock up my daughter, to prevent her eloping with the paltry clerk of a pitiful trader, it is forſooth an invaſion of the Bill of Rights, and a mortal ſtab to the great charter of liberty.

Marg. As Serjeant Second'em ſaid in the debate on the corn bill, "Then why don't you chuſe better ground, "brother, and learn to enlarge your bottom a little? "Conſider, you muſt draw the line of liberty ſomewhere; "for if theſe rights belong"—

Sir Tho. Mercy on us!

Marg. But indeed, my dear brother, you are got quite out of your depth: woman, I tell you, is a microcoſm, and rightly to rule her requires as great talents as to govern a ſtate. And what ſays the aphoriſm of Cardinal Polignac? "If you would not have a perſon deceive you, "be careful not to let him know you miſtruſt him?" and ſo of your daughter.

Sir Tho. Mrs Margaret Maxwell, beſtow your advice where it is wanted! Out of my depth! a likely ſtory indeed, that I, who am fixed here in a national truſt, appointed guardian of the Engliſh intereſt at the court of Madrid, ſhould not know how to manage a girl!

Marg. And pray, Mr Conſul, what information will your ſtation afford you? I don't deny your knowledge in export

export and import, nor doubt your ſkill in the difference between wet and dry goods; you may weigh with exactneſs the balance of trade, or explain the true ſpirit of a treaty of commerce; the ſurface, the mere ſkimmings of the political pot!

Sir Tho. Mighty well!

Marg. But had you, with me, traced things to their original ſource; had you diſcover'd all ſocial ſubordination to ariſe from original compact; had you read Machiavel, Monteſquieu, Locke, Bacon, Hobbes, Harrington, Hume; had you ſtudied the political teſtaments of Alberoni and Cardinal Richlieu—

Sir Tho. Mercy on us!

Marg. Had you analized the Pragmatic Sanction, and the Family-compact; had you toil'd thro' the laborious page of the Vinerian profeſſor, or eſtimated the prevailing manners with the Vicar of Newcaſtle; in a word, had you read Amicus upon taxation, and Inimicus upon repreſentation, you would have known—

Sir Tho. What?

Marg. That in ſpite of the frippery French Salick laws, woman is a free agent, a noun ſubſtantive entity, and, when treated with confidence—

Sir Tho. Why, perhaps, ſhe may not abuſe it: but ſtill, my ſage ſiſter, it is but a *perhaps*; now my method is certain, infallible; by confining her, I can't be deceived.

Marg. And pray, Sir, what right have you to confine her? look in your Puffendorff! tho' born in Spain, ſhe is a native of England; her birth-right is liberty—a better patrimonial eſtate than any of your deſpotic countries could give her.

Sir Tho. Zooks, you would tire the patience of Job! Pray anſwer me this; is Harriet my daughter?

Marg. What then? for that ineſtimable bleſſing ſhe is not beholden to you; nor can you, tho' a father, with reaſon, juſtice, or law, take it from her.

Sir Tho. Why, Margaret, you forget where you are! This, child, is the town of Madrid; you are amongſt a ſage, ſteady people, who know and revere the natural rights of a parent.

Marg. Natural rights! Can a right to tyrannize be founded in nature?

Sir Tho. Look'ee, Margaret! you are but loſing your time;

time; for unleſs you can prevail on Count Wall, or the preſident of Caſtille, to grant you a Habeas, why Harriet ſhall ſtay where ſhe is.

Marg. Ay, ay, you know where you are; but, if my niece will take my advice, the juſtice that is denied to her here, ſhe will inſtantly ſeek for elſewhere.

Sir Tho. Elſewhere? hark you, ſiſter! is it thus you anſwer my purpoſe in bringing you hither? I hoped to have my daughter's principles form'd by your prudence; her conduct directed by your experience and wiſdom.

Marg. The preliminary is categorically true.

Sir Tho. Then why don't you abide by the treaty?

Marg. Yes; you have given me powerful motives.

Sir Tho. But another word, Madam: as I don't chuſe that Harriet ſhould imbibe any more of your romantic republican notions, I ſhall take it as a great favour if you would prepare to quit this country with the firſt oportunity.

Marg. You need not have remonſtrated; a petition would have anſwered your purpoſe: I did intend to withdraw, and without taking leave; nor will I reſide on a ſpot where the great charter of my ſex is hourly invaded! No, Sir Thomas; I ſhall return to the land of liberty! but there expect to have your deſpotic dealings properly and publicly handled.

Sir Tho. What, you deſign to turn author?

Marg. There's no occaſion for that; liberty has already a champion in one of my ſex: the ſame pen that has dared to ſcourge the arbitrary actions of ſome of our Monarchs, ſhall do equal juſtice to the oppreſſive power of parents?

Sir Tho. With all my heart.

Marg. I may, perhaps, be too late to get you into the hiſtorical text; but, I promiſe you, you ſhall be ſoundly ſwinged in the marginal note.

Enter a Servant, who whiſpers to Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. What! now?

Serv. This inſtant.

Sir Tho. How did he get in?

Serv. By a ladder of ropes, dropt, I ſuppoſe, by Miſs Harriet from the balcony.

Sir Tho. That way, I reckon, he thinks to retreat; but I ſhall prevent him! Here, Dick, do you and Ralph run into

into the ſtreet, and front the houſe with a couple of carbines; bid James bring my toledo; and let the reſt of the fellows follow my ſteps!

Marg. Hey-day! what can be the meaning of this civil commotion?

Sir Tho. Nothing extraordinary; only the natural conſequence of ſome of your ſalutary ſuggeſtions.

Marg. Mine, Sir Thomas!

Sir Tho. Yes, yours, ſiſter Margaret!

Marg. I don't underſtand you.

Sir Tho. Oh, nothing but Hariet making uſe of her great natural charter of liberty, by letting young Invoice, Abraham Indigo's clerk, by the means of a ladder of ropes, into her chamber.

Marg. I am not ſurprized.

Sir Tho. Nor I neither.

Marg. The inſtant your ſuſpicions gave her a guard, I told her the act was tantamount to an open declaration of war, and ſanctified every ſtratagem.

Sir Tho. You did? mighty well, Madam! I hope then, for once, you will approve my proceedings; the law of nations ſhall be ſtrictly obſerved; you ſhall ſee how a ſpy ought to be treated, who is caught in the enemy's camp!

Enter Servant with the toledo.

Oh, here's my truſty toledo. Come, follow your leader! [*Exit with Servants.*

Marg. Oh, Sir, I ſhall purſue, and reconnoitre your motions; and tho' no cartel is ſettled between you, take care how you infringe the *jus gentium.* [*Exit* Margaret.

Another Chamber. Harriet *and* Invoice *diſcovered.*

Har. Are you ſure you were not obſerved?

Inv. I believe not.

Har. Well, Mr Invoice, you can, I think, now no longer doubt of my kindneſs; tho', let me tell you, you are a good deal indebted for this early proof of it to my father's ſeverity.

Inv. I am ſorry, Madam, an event, ſo happy for me, ſhould proceed from ſo unlucky a cauſe: but are there no hopes that Sir Thomas may be ſoftened in time?

Har. None: he is, both from nature and habit, inflexibly obſtinate. This too is his favourite foible; no German

man baron was ever more attached to the genealogical laws of alliance than he: marry his daughter to a perſon in trade? no! put his preſent favourite out of the queſtion, he can never be brought to ſubmit to it.

Inv. Dear Miſs Harriet, then why will you heſitate? there can be no other alternative; you muſt either ſubmit to marry the Count, or by flight eſcape from the—

Har. No, Mr Invoice, not till the laſt neceſſity drives me. Beſides, where can we go? how ſubſiſt? who will receive us?

Inv. "The world is all before us where to chuſe;" and, as we fly from oppreſſion, "Providence our guide."

Har. The world, Mr Invoice, is but a cold kind of common; and, as to Providence, let us firſt be ſure we deſerve its protection.—[*A noiſe without.*] Bleſs me! don't I hear ſome buſtle below?

Inv. Madam!

Har. Huſh! my father, as I live! I fear, Mr Invoice, you are diſcovered.

Inv. No, ſurely!

Sir Tho. [*without.*] Have you ſecured all the poſts?

Serv. [*without.*] All, Sir.

Sir Tho. Both the front and the rear?

Serv. Both.

Har. Loſt, paſt redemption!

Sir Tho. Then advance! now let us unharbour the raſcal!

Har. What can we do?

Sir Tho. Come, Madam, open your doors?

Har. The balcony, quick, Mr Invoice, the balcony!

Sir Tho. Unlock, Mrs Minx! your minion is diſcovered.

Inv. A couple of fellows ſtand below, with their pieces pointed directly againſt it.

Sir Tho. What, then, you will compel us to batter?

Har. The whole houſe is ſurrounded! how can you eſcape?

Inv. Where will this window conduct us?

Har. To the leads that join our houſe to the chymiſt's.

Inv. To the leads? it is but a ſtep; there is no danger.

Har. Then inſtantly fly! you have every thing to fear from my father.

Sir Tho. John, fetch the mattock and crow!

Inv. And leave my Harriet behind me?

Har.

Har. Secure yourſelf, and abandon me to my fate.

Inv. No, Madam, that I will never do; I'll dare your father's utmoſt reſentment.

Sir Tho. Where is that raſcal loitering?

Har. Then you are loſt!

Inv. Would my Harriet accompany my flight—

Har. Can you deſire it?

Inv. I do, I do; my deareſt angel, I do! By all that's ſacred, your honour ſhall be as ſecure with me as in the cell of a ſaint!

Har. But character, decency, prudence—

Inv. The occaſion, the danger, all juſtify—

Sir Tho. Oh, what, you are come at laſt.

Inv. Determine, my life! You have but a moment—

Har. Should you, Mr Invoice, deceive me—

Inv. When I do, may my laſt hope deceive me!

Har. It is a bold, a dangerous ſtep!

Inv. Fear nothing, my love!

[*Advances to the window, and gets out.*

Sir Tho. Drive at the pannel.

Marg. [*without.*] I enter my proteſt!

Sir Tho. And I will enter the room!

Inv. Now leap; all is ſafe.

[Harriet *gets out at the window.*

Sir Thomas, adieu!

Sir Tho. Wrench open the lock!

Marg. Ay, do, at your peril!

Sir Tho. Down with the door!

Marg. Then you ſhall all be ſwingingly ſouſed. Produce your authority.

Sir Tho. Mine!

Marg. You have none; not ſo much as the ſanction of a general warrant.

Sir Tho. What, then, I ſee I muſt do it myſelf: there it goes! Pretty law indeed, to lock a man out of his own houſe!

Enter Sir Thomas, Margaret, *and Servants.*

Now, Mrs.—Hey day! what are become of the parties? vaniſhed?

Marg. Deceived by your ſpies! no uncommon thing, brother, for a blundering general.

Sir Tho. You are ſure you ſaw him come in?

Serv.

Serv. Certain, Sir Thomas.

Sir Tho. Then I warrant we will ferret them out.—Come, lads! let not a corner eſcape you!

[*Exeunt* Sir Thomas *and Servants.*

Mar. I ſhall wait on your motions, and bring up the rear. [*Exit.*

Scene changes to the Chymiſt's.

Enter Invoice *and* Harriet *through the ſaſh.*

Inv. Safely landed, however.

Har. Are you ſure you are not purſued?

Inv. Not a ſoul: never fear! they will hardly venture this road.

Har. What a ſtep have you induced me to take! to what diſtreſs and difficulties have I expoſed myſelf!

Inv. Baniſh your fears, and let us look forward, my love.

Har. Nay, I have gone too far to retreat. Well, Sir, what is next to be done?

Inv. The Spaniards are naturally generous; perhaps, upon hearing our ſtory, the owner of the houſe may lend his aſſiſtance. This, I ſuppoſe, is the laboratory, and this door leads to the ſhop.

Devil. [*in a bottle.*] Heigh-ho!

Har. Who is that?

Inv. That! where?

Har. Did not you hear a voice?

Inv. None. Fancy, my love; only your fears.

Devil. Heigh-ho!

Har. There again!

Inv. I hear it now.—Who is there?

Devil. Me.

Inv. Me! he ſpeaks Engliſh! Who, and where are you?

Devil. Here in this bottle; where I have been cork'd up for theſe ſix months.

Inv. Cork'd up in a bottle! I never heard of ſuch a thing in my life, unleſs, indeed, in the Hay-market once.—Cork'd up in a bottle, d'ye ſay?

Devil. Ay; by the maſter of this houſe, a magician.

Inv. A magician! why then you are a ſpirit, I ſuppoſe.

Devil. You are right; I am the Devil.

Har. Mercy on us!

Devil. Don't be terrified, Miſs! you remember the old proverb, "The Devil is not ſo black as he is painted."

Inv. Well, but Sir—

Devil. A truce to your queſtions, my good Sir, for the preſent!—Conſider, ramm'd up in this narrow compaſs, I can't be much at my eaſe; now if you will but break the bottle before you on the floor—

Har. For heaven's ſake, Mr Invoice, take care what you do.

Devil. Why, my pretty Miſs, what riſque do you run? your affairs can hardly be changed for the worſe.

Har. That's true, indeed!

Devil. Believe me, Miſs, as matters ſtand, we can be of mutual uſe: your lover may deliver me from priſon, and I can prevent you both from going into confinement.

Inv. What ſays my Harriet? ſhall I rely on the gentleman's word?

Devil. Do, Madam! I am a devil of honour. Beſides, you have but a little time to conſider; in leſs than five minutes, you will have the Conſul and all his crew in the houſe.

Inv. Nay, then—Pray which is the bottle?

Devil. That in the middle, right before you.

Inv. There it goes!

[*He breaks the bottle, and* Devil *riſes out of it. Thunder.*

Har. Oh, what a—

Devil. I am not ſurprized, Miſs, that you are a little ſhocked at my figure: I could have aſſumed a much more agreeable form; but as we are to be a little better acquainted, I thought it beſt to quit all diſguiſe and pretence; therefore, Madam, you ſee me juſt as I am.

Har. I am ſure, Sir, you are ve—ve—very agreeable.

Devil. Yo—yo—you are pleaſed to compliment, Madam.—Come, anſwer me ſincerely; am I ſuch a being as you expected to ſee?

Har. Really, Sir, I can hardly ſay what I expected to ſee.

Devil. I own it is a puzzling queſtion? at leaſt, if the world

world does us juſtice in the contradictory qualities they are pleaſed to afford us.

Inv. You will forgive me, if I don't underſtand you.

Devil. Why, for all their ſuperlative epithets, you cannot but ſee how much men are beholden to us; by our means it is that you meaſure the extent both of your virtues and vices.

Inv. As how?

Devil. As thus: in deſcribing your friends, or your foes, they are *deviliſh* rich, *deviliſh* poor, *deviliſh* ugly, *deviliſh* handſome; now and then, indeed, to vary the mode of converſing, you make a little free with our condition and country, as, *belliſh* dull, *damn'd* clever, *belliſh* cold; pſha! how *damn'd* hot it is!

Inv. True, Sir, but I conſider this as a rethorical figure, a manner of ſpeaking deviſed and practiſed by dulneſs, to conceal the lack of ideas, and the want of expreſſions.

Devil. Partly that, I confeſs: not but there is ſome truth in the caſe; for at different times we have the power, and do aſſume the various forms you aſſign us.

Inv. We! I obſerve you always make uſe of the plural; is that, Sir, by way of diſtinction, or, is your family pretty large and extenſive?

Devil. Multitudinous as the ſands on the beach, or the motes in a ſun beam: how the deuce elſe do you think we could do all the buſineſs below? Why, there's ſcarce an individual amongſt you, at leaſt of any rank or importance, but has five or ſix of us in his train.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. A little before I got rammed in that phial, I had been for ſome time on very hard duty in this part of the world.

Inv. Of what kind?

Devil. The Dæmon of Power and I had long laid ſiege to a ſubject, the man a grandee; I was then a popular ſpirit, and wore the maſk of a patriot; at different times, we poſſeſſed him by turns; but, in the midſt of a violent ſtruggle (by which means I got lame on this leg, and obtained the nick-name of the Devil upon Sticks), the Dæmon of Vanity, a low under-ſtrapper amongſt us, held over his head a circle of gold, with five knobs on the top, and, *whew!* flew away with our prize in an inſtant.

Inv.

Inv. Under-ſtrapper! what, are there different ranks and orders amongſt you?

Devil. Without doubt.

Inv. And pray, Sir—I hope, no offence; but I would not be wanting in proper reſpect—are you, when at home, of condition? or how muſt I—

Devil. You mean, am I a devil of faſhion, or one of the baſe born?

Inv. I do.

Devil. I have no reaſon to be aſhamed of my family.

Inv. I don't doubt it. You will forgive me, if I make a miſtake: perhaps, my Lord Lucifer.

Devil. Who?

Inv. Lord Lucifer.

Devil. Lord Lucifer? how little you know of our folks! Lucifer a Lord! Why, that's the meaneſt raſcal amongſt us.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. Oh, a paltry mechanic! the very genius of jobbing! a mere bull and bear booby; the patron of lame ducks, brokers, and fraudulent bankrupts.

Inv. You amaze me! I vow I always thought him a principal agent.

Devil. He! Not at all. The fellow, indeed, gave himſelf ſome airs of importance, upon following the camp, and having the contractors and commiſſaries under his care; but that affair, you know, cloſed with the war.

Inv. What, then, are they now entirely out of his hands?

Devil. Yes; quite out of his: he only ſuggeſted their cent. per cent. ſqueezings, and prompted the various modes of extortion and rapine: but, in his room, they have ſix or ſeven dæmons a-piece, to direct the diſſipation of their ill-gotten wealth.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. Poor Lucifer, it is all over with him! if it were not for the fluctuation of India, an occaſional lottery, or a conteſted election, the alley would be empty, and Lucifer have as little to do as a pickpocket when the playhouſes are ſhut.

Inv. Perhaps, Sir, then your name may be Belzebub?

Devil. He? worſe and worſe! Not a devil that has the leaſt regard to his character would chuſe to be ſeen in his company: beſides, it is the moſt petulant, waſpiſh, quarrelſome

relſome cur—But no wonder; he is the imp of chicane, and protects the rotten part of the law.

Inv. Then he, at leaſt, has employment enough.

Devil. Yes, during the term, he has a good deal to do: he is the parent of quibbles, the guardian of pettifoggers, bad bail, and of bailiffs: the ſupporter of *alibis*, the ſource of ſham pleas, the maker and finder of laws, the patron of perjury, and a ſworn foe to all trials by jury! Not long ago, though, my gentleman was put to his ſhifts.

Inv. How was that?

Devil. The law had laid hold of an old friend of his, for being too poſitive as to a matter of fact; evidence, evaſion, protraction, pleas, every art was employed to acquit him, that the moſt conſummate ſkill could ſuggeſt; but all to no purpoſe.

Inv. That was ſtrange.

Devil. Beyond all belief; he could have hang'd a dozen innocent people with half the pains that this paltry perjury gave him.

Inv. How came that about?

Devil. Why—I don't know—he had unfortunately to do with an obſtinate magiſtrate, who bears a mortal hatred to rogues, and whoſe ſagacity could not be deceived. But, however, tho' he was not able to ſave his friend from the ſhame of conviction (a trifle, which he indeed but little regarded), yet he had the addreſs to evade, or at leaſt defer the time of his puniſhment.

Inv. By what means?

Devil. By finding a flaw.

Inv. A flaw! what's a flaw?

Devil. A legal loop-hole, that the lawyers leave open for a rogue now and then to creep through, that the game mayn't be wholly deſtroy'd.

Inv. Provident ſportſmen! Would it not be too much trouble to favour me with this particular inſtance?

Devil. Not at all. Why, Sir, when matters grew deſperate, and the caſe was given over for loſt, little Belzy ſtarts up in the form of an able practitioner, and humbly conceived, that his client could not be convicted upon that indictment; foraſmuch as therein he was charged with forſwearing himſelf *now*; whereas it clearly appeared, by the evidence, that he had only forſworn himſelf *then*: if, indeed, he had been indicted generally, for committing perjury

perjury *now* AND *then*, proofs might be produced of any perjury that he may have committed; whereas, by limiting the point of time to the *now*, no proofs could be admitted as to the *then*: ſo that, with ſubmiſſion, he humbly conceived, his client was clearly abſolved, and his character as fair and as ſpotleſs as a babe that's juſt born, and immaculate as a ſheet of white paper.

Inv. And the objection was good?

Devil. Fatal; there was no getting rid of the flaw.

Inv. And the gentleman—

Devil. Walks about at his eaſe; not a public place but he thruſts his perſon full in your face.

Inv. That ought not to be; the contempt of the public, that neceſſary ſupplement to the beſt digeſted body of laws, ſhould in theſe caſes be never diſpenſed with.

Devil. In days of yore, when the world was but young, that method had merit, and the ſenſe of ſhame was a kind of a curb; but knaves are now ſo numerous and wealthy, they can keep one another in countenance, and laugh at the reſt of the world.

Inv. There may be ſomething in that—Well, Sir, I have twice been out of my gueſs; will you give me leave to hazard a third! Perhaps you are Belphegor, or Uriel?

Devil. Neither. They too are but diminutive devils: the firſt favours the petty pilfering frauds; he may be traced in the double ſcore and ſoap'd pot of the publican, the alum and chalk of the baker, in the ſophiſticated mixtures of the brewers of wine and of beer, and in the falſe meaſures and weights of them all.

Inv. And Uriel?

Devil. He is the dæmon of quacks and of mountebanks; a thriving race all over the world, but their true ſeat of empire is England: there, a ſhort ſword, a tye, and a noſtrum, a month's advertiſing, with a ſhower of handbills, never fail of creating a fortuue. But of this tribe I foreſee I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak hereafter.

Inv. Well, but, Sir—

Devil. Come, Sir, I will put an end to your pain; for, from my appearance, it is impoſſible you ſhould ever gueſs at my perſon.—Now, Miſs, what think you of Cupid?

Har. You? you Cupid? you the gay god of love?

Devil. Yes; me, me, Miſs!—What, I ſuppoſe you expected the quiver at my back, and the bow in my hand; the

the purple pinions, and filletted forehead, with the blooming graces of youth and of beauty.

Har. Why, I can't but ſay the poets had taught me to expect charms—

Devil. That never exiſted but in the fire of their fancy; all fiction and phrenzy!

Inv. Then, perhaps, Sir, theſe creative gentlemen may err as much in your office, as it is clear they have miſtaken your perſon.

Devil. Why, their notions of me are but narrow. It is true, I do a little buſineſs in the amorous way; but my dealings are of a different kind to thoſe they deſcribe.—My province lies in forming conjunctions abſurd and prepoſterous: it is I that couple boys and beldames, girls and greybeards, together; and when you ſee a man of faſhion lock'd in legitimate wedlock with the ſtale leavings of half the fellowsin town, or a lady of fortune ſetting out for Edinburgh in a poſt-chaiſe with her footman, you may always ſet it down as ſome of my handywork. But this is but an inconſiderable branch of my buſineſs.

Inv. Indeed!

Devil. The ſeveral arts of the drama, dancing, muſic, and painting, owe their exiſtence to me: I am the father of faſhions, the inventor of *quints*, *trente*, *quarante*, and hazard? the guardian of gameſters, the genius of gluttony, and the author, protector, and patron of licentiouſneſs, lewdneſs, and luxury.

Inv. Your department is large.

Devil. One time or other I may give you a more minute account of theſe matters; at preſent we have not a moment to loſe: ſhould my tyrant return, I muſt expect to be again cork'd up in a bottle. [*Knocking.*] And hark! it is the Conſul that knocks at the door; therefore be quick! how can I ſerve you?

Inv. You are no ſtranger, Sir, to our diſtreſs: Here, we are unprotected and friendleſs; could your art convey us to the place of our birth—

Devil. To England?

Inv. If you pleaſe.

Devil. Without danger, and with great expedition.—Come to this window and lay hold of my cloak.—I have often reſided in England: at preſent, indeed, there are but few of our family there; every ſeventh year, we have a general

general diſpenſation for reſidence; for at that time the inhabitants themſelves can play *the devil* without our aid or aſſiſtance.—Off we go! ſtick faſt to your hold!

[*Thunder, Exeunt.*

ACT II.

A ſtreet in London.

Enter Devil, Invoice, *and* Harriet.

Devil. WELL, my good friends, I hope you are not diſpleaſed with your journey.

Inv. We had no time to be tired.

Har. No vehicle was ever ſo eaſy.

Devil. Then by you mortals what injuſtice is done us, when every crazy, creaking, jolting, jumbling coach, is called *the devil of a carriage.*

Inv. Very true.

Devil. Oh, amongſt you we are horridly uſed—Well, Sir, you now ſee I am a devil of honour, and have punctually obeyed your commands: but I ſha'n't limit my gratitude to a literal compliance with our compact; is there any thing elſe for your ſervice?

Inv. Were I not afraid to treſpaſs too much on your time—

Devil. A truce to your compliments! Though they are the common change of the world, we know of what baſe metal the coin is compoſed, and have cried down the currency: ſpeak your wiſhes at once.

Inv. England, Sir, is our country, it is true; but Miſs Maxwell being born abroad, and my leaving it young, have made us both as much ſtrangers to its manners and cuſtoms, as if you had ſet us down at Iſpahan or Delhi: give us, then, ſome little knowledge of the people with whom we are to live.

Devil. That taſk, young gentleman, is too much even for the Devil himſelf! Where liberty reigns, and property is pretty equally ſpread, independence and pride will give each individual a peculiar and ſeparate character: when claſſed in profeſſions, indeed, they then wear ſome ſingular marks that

that diſtinguiſh them from the reſt of their race; theſe it may be neceſſary for you to know.

Inv. You will highly oblige me.

Devil. And at the ſame time that I am ſhewing you perſons, I will give you ſome little light into things. Health and property, you know, are the two important objects of human attention: you ſhall firſt ſee their ſtate and ſituation in London.

Inv. You mean the practice of phyſic and law?

Devil. I do. And as to the firſt, you will find it, in ſome of the profeſſors, a ſcience, noble, ſalutary, and liberal; in others, a trade, as mean as it is mercenary; a contemptible combination of dunces, nurſes, and apothecaries: but you have now a lucky opportunity of knowing more in an hour of the great improvements in this branch of civil ſociety, than, by any other means, ſeven years could have taught you.

Inv. Explain, if you pleaſe.

Devil. The ſpirit of diſcord prevails: the republic of tied periwigs, like the Romans of old, have turned their arms from the reſt of mankind, to draw their ſhort ſwords on themſelves.

Inv. But how came this about.

Devil. To carry on the metaphor, you muſt know, in this great town, there are two corps of theſe troops, equally numerous, and equally formidable: the firſt, it is true, are diſciplined, and fight under a general, whom they chriſten a Preſident: The ſecond contains the huſſars, and pandours of phyſic; they rarely attack a patient together; not but the latter ſingle-handed can do good execution.

Inv. But their cauſe of contention?

Devil. Pride. The light troops are jealous of ſome honours the others poſſeſs by preſcription, and though but a militia, think they have right to an equal rank with the regulars.

Inv. Why, this in time may ruin their ſtate.

Devil. True; but that we muſt prevent; it is our intereſt to make up this breach: already we feel the fatal effects of their feuds: by neglecting their patients, the weekly bills daily decline, and new ſubjects begin to grow ſcarce in our realms.

Inv. This does indeed claim your attention.

Devil. We purpoſe to call in the aid of the law; bleeding the purſe is as effectual for damping the ſpirit, as opening a vein for lowering the pulſe: the dæmon of litigation has already poſſeſſed the licentiates; I muſt infuſe the ſame paſſion into the preſident; and I warrant you, in two or three terms, with two or three trials, all ſides will be heartily tired. But, a-propos! I ſee a brace of apothecaries coming this way; they ſeem deep in debate: let us liſten; we ſhall beſt learn from them the preſent poſture of—Huſh, hide!—You ſhall here too have a proof what a Proteus I am. [*They retire.*

Enter Julep *and* Apozem, *with a letter.*

Julep. I tell you, Apozem, you are but young in the buſineſs, and don't foreſee how much we ſhall be all hurt in the end.

Apoz. Well, but what can be done, Mr Julep? Here Dr Hellebore writes me word, that they threaten a ſiege, and are provided with fire-arms: would you have them ſurrender the College at once?

Julep. Fire-arms? If they are mad enough not to know that the pen is the doctor's beſt piſtol, why, let them proceed!

Apoz. But are we to ſtand quietly by, and ſee the very ſeat of the ſcience demoliſhed and torn?

Julep. And with what arms are we to defend it? where are our cannon? We have mortars indeed, but then they are fit to hold nothing but peſtles; and, as to our ſmall arms, of what uſe can they be in a ſiege? they are made, you know, to attack only the rear.

Apoz. Come, come, Mr Julep, you make too light of theſe matters: to have the lawful deſcendants from Galen, the throne of Eſculapius, overturned by a parcel of Goths!

Julep. Peace, Apozem, or treat your betters with proper reſpect! What, numſkull, do you think all phyſicians are blockheads, who have not waſhed their hands in the Cam or the Iſis?

Apoz. Well, but I hope you will allow that a univerſity-doctor—

Julep. May, for aught you know, be a dunce. Beſides, fool, what have we to do with degrees? The doctor that doſes beſt is the beſt doctor for us. You talk of the College;

lege; there are ſome of their names, I am ſure, that I never deſire to ſee on my file.

Apoz. Indeed!

Julep. Indeed? no, indeed. Why, there's Dr Diet, that makes ſuch a duſt: he had a perſon of faſhion, a patient of mine, under his care t'other day; as fine a ſlow fever! I was in hopes of half making my fortune—

Apoz. Yes, I love a ſlow fever. Was it nervous?

Julep. Ay; with a lovely dejection of ſpirits.

Apoz. That was delightful, indeed! I look upon the nerves and the bile to be the two beſt friends we have to our back.—Well, pray, and how did it anſwer?

Julep. Not at all; the ſcoundrel let him ſlip through my hands for a ſong; only a paltry ſix pounds and a crown.

Apoz. Shameful!

Julep. Infamous! and yet, forſooth, he was one of your College. Well, now to ſhew you the difference in men; but the very week after, Dr Linctus, from Leyden, run me up a bill of thirty odd pounds, for only attending Alderman Soakpot ſix days in a ſurfeit.

Apoz. Ay, that was doing of buſineſs.

Julep. Ah! that's a ſweet pretty practitioner, Apozem: we muſt all do our utmoſt to puſh him.

Apoz. Without doubt. But, notwithſtanding all that you ſay, Mr Julep, there are ſome of the gentlemen of the College, that I know—

Julep. Ah! as fine fellows as ever fingered a pulſe; not one of the trade will deny it.

Apoz. But, amongſt all now, old Nat Nightſhade is the man for my money.

Julep. Yes; Nat, Nat has merit, I own; but, pox take him! he is ſo deviliſh quick: to be ſure, he has a very prety fluent pen whilſt it laſts; but then he makes ſuch diſpatch, that one has hardly time to ſend in two dozen of draughts.

Apoz. Yes; the doctor drives on, to be ſure.

Julep. Drives on! If I am at all free in the houſe when old Nightſhade is ſent for, as a preparatory doſe I always recommend an attorney.

Apoz. An attorney? for what?

Julep. To make the patient's will, before he ſwallows the doctor's preſcription.

Apoz. That is prudent.

Julep.

Julep. Yes; I generally afterwards get the thanks of the family.

Apoz. What, Mr Julep, for the attorney, or the phyſician? ha, ha!

Julep. Ha, ha! you are arch, little Apozem; quite a wag, I profeſs.

Apoz. Why, you know, brother Julep, theſe are ſubjects upon which one can hardly be ſerious.

Julep. True, True; but then you ſhould never laugh loud in the ſtreet: we may indulge, indeed, a kind of ſimpering ſmile to our patients, as we drive by in our chariots; but then there is a decency, not to ſay dignity, that becomes the public demeanour of us who belong to the faculty.

Apoz. True. And yet there are times when one can hardly forbear: why, t'other day now I had like to have burſt: I was following a funeral into St George's—a ſweet pretty burying; velvet pall, hatband and gloves; and, indeed, the widow was quite handſome in all things; paid my bill the next week, without ſconcing off ſixpence, though they were thought to have lived happily together—but, as I was ſaying, as we were entering the church, who ſhould ſtand in the porch but Kit Cabbage the tailor, with a new pair of breeches under his arm: the ſly rogue made me a bow, "Servant, Mr Apozem!" ſays he; "what, you are carrying home your work too, I ſee."—Did you every hear ſuch a dog?

Julep. Ay, ay; let them, let, them—But, is not that Dr Squib that is croſſing the way?

Apoz. Yes; you may ſee it is Squib by his ſhuffle.—What, I ſuppoſe now he is ſcouring away for the College.

Julep. Who? Squib? how little you know of him! he did not care if all our tribe was tipped into the Thames.

Apoz. No!

Julep. No. Lord help you! he is too much taken up with the national illneſs, to attend to particular ails: why, he would quit the beſt patient in town, to hunt after a political ſecret; and would rather have a whiſper from a great man in the Court of Requeſts, than five hundred pounds for attending him in a chronical caſe.

Apoz. Wonderful!—Who can that dirty boy be that he has in his hand?

Julep. One of his ſcouts, I ſuppoſe.—We ſhall ſee.

Re-enter

Re-enter Devil, *as* Dr Squib, *and Printer's-Devil.*

Squib. And you are ſure this was worked off one of the firſt?

Boy. Not a ſingle one, Sir, has been ſent out as yet.

Squib. That is daintily done, my dear devil! Here, child, here's ſixpence. When your maſter gives you the reſt, you need not be in haſte to deliver them, but ſtep into the firſt public-houſe to refreſh you.

Boy. I ſhall, Sir.

Squib. By that means, I ſhall be earlieſt to treat two or three great men that I know with the ſight.

Boy. No further commands, Sir?

Squib. None, child.—But, d'ye hear? if you can at any time get me the rough reading of any tart political manuſcript, before it goes to the preſs, you ſha'n't be a loſer.

Boy. I ſhall try, Sir.

Squib. That's well! Mind your buſineſs, and go on but as you begin, and I foreſee your fortune is made: come, who knows but in a little time, if you are a good boy, you may get yourſelf committed to Newgate.

Boy. Ah, Sir, I am afraid I am too young.

Squib. Not at all: I have ſeen lads in limbo much younger than you. Come, don't be faint-hearted; there has many a printer been raiſed to the pillory from as ſlender beginnings.

Boy. That's great comfort, however. Well, Sir, Ill do my endeavour. [*Exit.*

Squib. Do, do!—What, Apozem! Julep! well encountered, my lads! You are a couple of lucky rogues! Here, here's a treat for a prince; ſuch a print, boys! juſt freſh from the plate: feel it; ſo wet you may wring it.

Julep. And pray, good Doctor, what is the ſubject?

Squib. Subject? Gad take me, a trimmer! this will make ſome folks that we know look about them: hey, Julep, don't you think this will ſting!

Julep. I profeſs I don't underſtand it.

Squib. No? Why, zounds, it is as plain as a pikeſtaff; in your own way too, you blockhead! Can't you ſee? Read, read the title, you rogue! But, perhaps you can't without ſpectacles. Let me ſee; ay, "The State Quacks; "or Britannia Dying:" You take it?

Julep. Very well.

Squib.

Squib. There you ſee her ſtretched along on a pallet; you may know ſhe is Britannia, by the ſhield and ſpear at the head of her bed.

Apoz. Very plain; for all the world like the wrong ſide of a halfpenny!

Squib. Well ſaid, little Apozem! you have diſcernment, I ſee. Her diſeaſe is a lethargy; you ſee how ſick ſhe is, by holding her hand to her head; don't you ſee that?

Julep. I do, I do.

Squib. Well then, look at that figure there upon her left hand.

Julep. Which?

Squib. Why, he that holds a draught to her mouth.

Julep. What, the man with the phial?

Squib. Ay, he! he with the phial: that is ſuppoſed to be—[*whiſpers.*] offering her laudanum, to lull her faſter aſleep.

Julep. Laudanum! a noble medicine when adminiſtered properly: I remember once, in a locked jaw—

Squib. Damn your lock'd jaw! hold your prating, you puppy! I wiſh your jaws were lock'd! Pox take him, I have forgot what I was going to—Apozem, where did I leave off?

Apoz. You left off at faſter aſleep.

Squib. True; I was at faſter aſleep. Well then; you ſee that thin figure there, with the meager chaps; he with the ſtraw in his hand.

Apoz. Very plain.

Squib. He is ſuppoſed to be—[*whiſpers.*] You take me?

Julep. Ay, ay.

Squib. Who rouzes Britannia, by tickling her noſe with that ſtraw; ſhe ſtarts, and with a jerk—[*ſtarting, ſtrikes* Julep.] I beg pardon!—and with a jerk knocks the bottle of laudanum out of his hand; and ſo, by that there means, you ſee, Britannia is delivered from death.

Julep. Ay, ay.

Squib. Hey! you ſwallow the ſatire; pretty bitter, I think?

Julep. I can't ſay that I quite underſtand—that is—a—a—

Squib. Not underſtand? then what a fool am I to throw away my time on a dunce! I ſhall miſs too the reading a new pamphlet in Red-Lyon-ſquare; and at ſix I muſt be at

at Serjeant's-Inn, to juſtify bail for a couple of journeymen printers.

Apoz. But, Dr Squib, you ſeem to have forgot the caſe of the College, your brethren.

Squib. I have no time to attend their trifling ſquabbles: the nation, the nation, Mr Apozem, engroſſes my care. The College! could they but get me a ſtyptic to ſtop the bleeding wounds of my—it is there, there, that I feel! Oh, Julep, A pozem,

Could they but caſt the water off this land,
Purge her groſs humours, purify her blood,
And give her back her priſtine health again,
I would applaud them to the very echo
That ſhould applaud again!

Julep. Indeed, Dr Squib, that I believe is out of the way of the College.

Squib. Throw phyſic to the dogs then! I'll have none o't
But tell me, Apozem, inform me, Julep,
What ſenna, rhubarb, or what purgative drug,
Can ſcour theſe——hence?

You underſtand me, lads!

Julep. In good truth, not I, Sir.

Squib. No! then ſo much the better! I warrant little Pozy does.—Well, adieu, my brave boys! for I have not an inſtant to loſe. Not underſtand me, hey? Apozem, you do, you rogue?—

What ſenna, rhubarb, or—hey—can ſcour theſe Sc—

Egad, I had like to have gone too far!—Well, bye, bye! [*Exit* Squib.

Julep. Why, the poor man ſeems out of his ſenſes.

Apoz. When he talked of throwing phyſic to the dogs, I confeſs I began to ſuſpect him. But we ſhall be late; we muſt attend our ſummons, you know.

Julep. Throw phyſic to the dogs! I can tell thee, Apozem, if he does not get cured of theſe fancies and freaks, he is more likely to go to the kennel by half. Throw phyſic to the dogs! an impertinent ignorant puppy! [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Devil, Invoice, *and* Harriet.

Devil. Well, I think chance has thrown a pretty good ſample into your way. Now, if I could but get one to conduct you—But ſtay! who have we here?

Enter

Enter Laſt, *with a pair of ſhoes.*

Laſt. Pray, good gentleman, can you tell a body which is the ready road to find Warwick-lane?

Devil. Warwick-lane, friend? and prithee what can thy errand be there?

Laſt. I am going there to take out a licence to make me a doctor, an like your Worſhip.

Devil. Where do you live?

Laſt. A little way off, in the country.

Devil. Your name, honeſt friend, and your buſineſs?

Laſt. My name, Maſter, is Laſt; by trade I am a doctor, and by profeſſion a maker of ſhoes: I was born to the one, and bred up to the other.

Devil. Born? I don't underſtand you.

Laſt. Why, I am a ſeventh ſon, and ſo were my father.

Devil. Oh! a very clear title. And pray, now, in what branch does your ſkill chiefly lie?

Laſt. By caſting a water, I cures the jaundarſe; I taps folks for a tenpenny; and have a choice charm for the agar; and, over and above that, Maſter, I bleeds.

Devil. Bleeds? and are your neighbours ſo bold as to truſt you?

Laſt. Truſt me? ay, Maſter, that they will, ſooner than narra a man in the country. Mayhap you may know Dr Tyth'em, our rector at home.

Devil. I can't ſay that I do.

Laſt. He's the flower of a man in the pulpit. Why, t'other day, you muſt know, taking a turn in his garden, and thinking of nothing at all, down falls the doctor flat in a fit of perplexity; Madam Tyth'em, believing her huſband was dead, directly ſent the ſexton for I.

Devil. An affectionate wife!

Laſt. Yes; they are a main happy couple. Sure as a gun, Maſter, when I comed, his face was as black as his caſſock: but, howſomdever, I took out my launcelot, and forthwith opened a large artifice here in one of the juglers: the doctor bled like a pig.

Devil. I dare ſay.

Laſt. But it did the buſineſs, howſomdever; I compaſſed the job.

Devil. What, he recovered?

Laſt. Recovered? Lord help you! why, but laſt Sunday

day was ſe'ennight—to be ſure, the doctor is given to weeze a little—becauſe why, he is main opulent, and apt to be tiſicky—but he compoſed as ſweet a diſcourſe—I ſlept from begining to end.

Devil. That was compoſing, indeed.

Laſt. Ay, warn't it, Maſter, for a man that is ſtrucken in years?

Devil. Oh, a wonderful effort!

Laſt. Well, like your Worſhip, and, beſides all this I have been telling you, I have a pretty tight hand at a tooth.

Devil. Indeed!

Laſt. Ay, and I'll ſay a bold word, that, in drawing a thouſand, I never ſtumpt a man in my life: now let your Raſperini's, and all your foreign Mounſeers, with their fine dainty freeches, ſay the like if they can.

Devil. I defy them.

Laſt. So you may. Then, about a dozen years ago, before theſe here Suttons made ſuch a noiſe, I had ſome thoughts of occupying for the ſmall-pox.

Devil. Ay; that would have wound up your bottom at once. And, why did not you?

Laſt. Why, I don't know, Maſter; the neighbours were frightful, and would not conſent; otherwiſe, by this time, 'tis my belief, men, women, and children, I might have occupied twenty thouſand at leaſt.

Devil. Upon my word!—But, you ſay a dozen years, Mr Laſt: as you have practiſed phyſic without permiſſion ſo long, what makes you now think of getting a licence?

Laſt. Why, it is all along with one Lotion, a potter-carrier, that lives in a little town hard by we; he is grown old and laſcivious, I think, and threatens to preſent me at ſize, if ſo be I practize any longer.

Devil. What, I ſuppoſe you run away with the buſineſs?

Laſt. Right, Maſter, you have gueſſed the matter at once. So I was telling my tale to Sawney M'Gregor, who comes now and then to our town with his pack; God, he adviſed me to get made a doctor at once, and ſend for a diplummy from Scotland.

Devil. Why, that was the right road, Mr Laſt.

Laſt. True. But my Mr Tyth'em tells me, that I can get it done for pretty near the ſame price here in London: ſo, I had rather, d'ye ſee, lay out my money at home, than

tranſport it to foreign parts, as we ſay; becauſe why, Maſter, I thinks there has too much already gone that road.

Devil. Spoke like an Engliſhman!

Laſt. I have a pair of ſhoes here, to carry home to farmer Fallow's ſon, that lives with Mr Grogram the mercer, hard by here in Cheapſide; ſo I thought I might as well do both buſineſſes under one.

Devil. True. Your way, Mr Laſt, lies before you; the ſecond ſtreet, you muſt turn to the left; then enter the firſt great gates that you ſee.

Laſt. And who muſt I aks for?

Devil. Oh, pull out your purſe; you will find that hint ſufficient: it is a part of the world where a fee is never refuſed.

Laſt. Thank you, Maſter! You are main kind; very civil indeed! [*Going, returns.*] I wiſh, Maſter, you had now either the agar or jaundarſe; I would ſet you right in a trice.

Devil. Thank you, Mr Laſt; but I am as well as I am.

Laſt. Or, if ſo be you likes to open a vein, or would have a tooth or two knocked out of your head, I'll do it for nothing.

Devil. Not at preſent, I thank you! when I want, I'll call at your houſe in the country. [*Exit* Laſt.] Well, my young couple, and what ſay you now?

Inv. Say, Sir? that I am more afraid of being ſick than ever I was in my life.

Devil. Pho! you know nothing as yet. But, my time draws nigh for poſſeſſing the Preſident: if I could but get ſome intelligent perſon to conduct you to the place where the licentiates aſſemble—There ſeems a ſober, ſedate looking lad; perhaps he may anſwer our purpoſe. Hark'e, young man!

Enter Johnny Macpherſon.

Macp. What's your wul, Sir? would you ſpear aught wi me?

Devil. Though I think I can can give a good gueſs, pray from what part of the world may you come?

Macp. My name is Johnny Macpherſon, and I came out of the north.

Devil. Are you in buſineſs at preſent?

Macp. I conna ſay that, Sir, nor that I am inteerely daſtitute neither; but I ſal be unco glad to get a mair ſolid eſtaabliſhment.

Devil.

Devil. Have you been long in this town?

Macp. About a month awa, Sir: I landed fra Leith, in the gude ſhip the Traquair, Davy Donaldſon maiſter, and am lodged wi Sawney Sinclair, at the ſign o' the ceety of Glaſcow, not far fra the Monument.

Devil. But you are in employment?

Macp. Ay, for ſome paart of the day.

Devil. And to what may your profits amount.

Macp. Ah! for the mater of that, it is a praty ſmart little income.

Devil. Is it a ſecret how much?

Macp. Not at aw: I get threepence an hour for larning Latin to a phyſician in the ceety.

Devil. The very man that we want.—Latin! and, what, are you capable?

Macp. Cappable! Hut awa, mon! Ken ye, that I was heed of the humanity claſs for mair than a twalvemonth? and was offered the chair of the gramatical profeſſorſhip in the College, which amunts to a mater of ſux pounds Britiſh a-year.

Devil. That's more than I knew. Can you gueſs, Sir, where your ſcholar is now?

Macp. It is na long, Sir, that I laſt him conning his *As in præſenti*; after which, he talked of ganging to meet ſome friends o' the faculty, aboot a ſort of a ſquabble, that he ſays is ſprang up among them; he wanted me to gang along wi him, as I had gi'n myſel to ſtudy madicine a little, before I quitted the north.

Devil. Do you know the public-houſe where they meet?

Macp. Yes, yes, unco weel, Sir; it is at the tavern the ſouth ſide of Paul's kirk.

Devil. Will you take the trouble to conduct this young couple thither? they will amply reward you.—You and your partner will follow this lad. Fear nothing! by my art, you are inviſible to all but thoſe that you deſire ſhould ſee you. At the College we ſhall rejoin one another; for thither the licentiates will lead you.

Inv. But how ſhall we be able to diſtinguiſh you from the reſt of the Fellows.

Devil. By my large wig, and ſuperior importance; in a word, you muſt look for me in the *Preſident*.

Inv. Adieu. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

ACT III.

SCENE *A Street.*

Fingerfee, Sligo, Oſafafras, Broadbrim, *other Doctors, and* Macpherſon *diſcovered.*

Fing. NO; I can't help thinking this was by much the beſt method. If, indeed, they refuſe us an amicable entrance, we are then juſtified in the uſe of corroſives.

Sligo. I tell you, Dr Fingerfee—I am ſorry, d'ye ſee, to differ from ſo old a practitioner; but I don't like your preſcription at all, at all: for what ſignifies a palliative regiment, with ſuch a rotten conſtitution? May I never finger a pulſe as long as I live, if you get their voluntary conſent to go in, unleſs indeed it be by compulſion.

Oſaf. I entirely coincide with my very capable countryman, Dr Sligo, d'ye ſee; and do give my advice, in this conſultation, for putting the whole College under a courſe of ſteel, without further delay.

Sligo. I am much obligated to you for your kind compliment, Doctor. But, pray, what may your name be?

Oſaf. Dr Oſafafras, at your humble ſervice.

Sligo. I am your very obadient alſho! I have hard tell of your name. But what did you mane by my countryman? Pray, Doctor, of what nation are you?

Oſaf Sir, I have the honour to be a native of Ireland.

Sligo. Oſafafras? that's a name of no note; he is not a Mileſian, I am ſure. The family, I ſuppoſe, came over t'other day with Strongbow, not above ſeven or eight hundred years ago; or perhaps a deſcendant from one of Oliver's drummers.—'Pon my conſcience, Doctor, I ſhould hardly belave you were Iriſh.

Oſaf. What, Sir, d'ye doubt my veracity?

Sligo. Not at all, my dear Doctor; it is not for that: But, between me and yourſelf, you have lived a long time in this town.

Oſaf. Like enough.

Sligo. Ay; and was here a great while before ever I ſaw it.

Oſaf.

Oſaf. What of that?

Sligo. Very well, my dear Doctor: then, putting that and t'other together, my notion of the upſhot is, that if ſo be you are a native of Ireland, upon my conſcience, you muſt have been born there very young.

Oſaf. Young? ay, to be ſure: why, my ſoul, I was chriſtened there.

Sligo. Ay!

Oſaf. Ay, was I, in the county of Meath.

Sligo. Oh, that alters the property; that makes it as clear as Fleet-Ditch. I ſhould be glad, countryman, of your nearer acquaintance. But what little ſlim doctor is that, in his own head of hair? I don't recollect to have ſeen his features before.

Oſaf. Nor I, to my knowledge.

Sligo. Perhaps he may be able to tell me, if I aks him himſelf.—I am proud to ſee you, Doctor, on this occaſion; becaaſe why, it becomes every jontleman that is of the faculty—that is, that is not of their faculty; you underſtand me—to look about him and ſtir.

Macp. Oh, by my troth, you are right, Sir: the leemiting of phyſic aw to ain hooſe, caw it a College, or by what denomination you wull, it is at beſt but eſtaabliſhing a ſort of monopoly.

Sligo. 'Pon my conſcience, that is a fine obſervation.—By the twiſt of your tongue, Doctor (no offence), I ſhould be apt to gueſs that you might be a foreigner born?

Macp. Sir!

Sligo. From Ruſſia, perhaps, or Muſcovy?

Macp. Hut awa, mon! not at aw: zounds, I am a Breeton.

Sligo. Then, I ſhould ſuppoſe, Doctor, pretty far to the northward.

Macp. Ay; you are right, Sir.

Sligo. And pray, Doctor, what particular branch of our buſineſs may have taken up the moſt of your time?

Macp. Botany.

Sligo. Botany! in what College?

Macp. The Univerſity of St Andrew's.

Oſaf. Pray, Doctor, is not botany a very dry ſort of a ſtudy?

Sligo. Moſt damnably ſo in thoſe parts, my dear Doctor; for

for all the knowledge they have they muſt get from dried herbs, becaaſe the devil of any green that will grow there.

Macp. Sir, your information is wrong.

Sligo. Come, my dear Doctor, hold your palaver, and don't be after puffing on us, becaaſe why, you know in your conſcience that in your part of the world you get no cabbage but thiſtles; and thoſe you are obliged to raiſe upon hot-beds.

Macp. Thiſtles! zounds, Sir, d'ye mean to affront me?

Sligo. That, Doctor, is as you plaaſes to taake it.

Macp. God's life, Sir, I would ha' you to ken, that there is narra a mon wi his heed upon his ſhoulders that dare—

Fing. Peace, peace, gentlemen! let us have no civil diſcord. Dr Sligo is a lover of pleaſantry; but, I am ſure, had no deſign to affront you: a joke, nothing elſe.

Macp. A joke! ah; I like a joke weel enough; but I did na underſtond the Doctor's gibing and geering: perhaps my wut may not be aw together as ſharp as the Doctor's, but I have a ſword, Sir—

Sligo. A ſword, Sir!

Fing. A ſword! ay, ay; there is no doubt but you have both very good ones; but reſerve them for—Oh! here comes our ambaſſador.

Enter Diachylon.

Well, Dr Diachylon, what news from the College? will they allow us free ingreſs and egreſs?

Diac. I could not get them to ſwallow a ſingle demand.

All. No?

Sligo. Then let us drive there, and drench them.

Diac. I was heard with diſdain, and refuſed with an air of defiance.

Sligo. There, gentlemen! I foretold you what would happen at firſt.

All. He did, he did.

Sligo. Then we have nothing for it, but to force our paſſage at once.

All. By all means; let us march!

Broad. Friend Fingerfee, would our brethren but incline their ears to me for a minute—

Fing. Gentlemen, Dr Broadbrim deſires to be heard.

All. Hear him, hear him!

Sligo.

Sligo. Paw, honey, what ſignifies hearing? I long to be doing, my jewel!

Fing. But hear Dr Melchiſedech Broadbrim, however.

All. Ay, ay; hear Dr Broadbrim!

Broad. Fellow-labourers in the ſame vineyard! ye know well how much I ſtand inclined to our cauſe; foraſmuch as not one of my brethren can be more zealous than I—

All. True, true.

Broad. But ye wot alſo, that I hold it not meet or wholſome to uſe a carnal weapon, even for the defence of myſelf; much more unſeemly then muſt I deem it to draw the ſword for the offending of others.

Sligo. Paw! brother Doctors, don't let him bother us, with his *yea* and *nay* nonſenſe!

Broad. Friend Sligo, do not be choleric; and know, that I am as free to draw my purſe in this cauſe, as thou art thy ſword: and thou wilt find, at the length, notwithſtanding thy ſwaggering, that the firſt will do us beſt ſervice.

Sligo. Well, but—

All. Hear him, hear him!

Broad. It is my notion, then, brethren, that we do forthwith ſend for a ſinful man in the fleſh, called an attorney.

Sligo. An attorney!

Broad. Ay, an attorney; and that we do direct him to take out a parchment inſtrument, with a ſeal fixed thereto.

Sligo. Paw, pox! what good can that do?

Broad. Don't be too haſty, friend Sligo.—And therewith, I ſay, let him poſſeſs the outward tabernacle of the vain man, who delighteth to call himſelf Preſident, and carry him before the men cloathed in lambſkin, who at Weſtminſter are now ſitting in judgement.

Sligo. Paw! a law-ſuit! that won't end with our lives.—Let us march!

All. Ay, ay.

Sligo. Come, Dr Habakkuk, will you march in the front or the rear?

Hab. Pardon me, Doctor! I cannot attend you.

Sligo. What, d'ye draw back, when it comes to the puſh?

Hab. Not at all; I would gladly join in putting theſe Philiſtines to flight! for I abhor them worſe than hogs' puddings,

puddings, in which the unclean beaſt and the blood are all jumbled together.

Sligo. Pretty food, for all that.

Hab. But this is Saturday; and I dare not draw my ſword on the Sabbath.

Sligo. Then ſtay with your brother Melchiſedech; for, though of different religions, you are both of a kidney.—Come, Doctors; out with your ſwords! Huzza! and now for the Lane! Huzza! [*Exeunt.*

Manent Broadbrim *and* Habakkuk.

Broad. Friend Habakkuk, thou ſeeſt how headſtrong and wilful theſe men are: but let us uſe diſcretion, however. Wilt thou ſtep to the inn that taketh its name from the city of Lincoln? enquire there for a man, with a red rag at his back, a ſmall black cap on his pate, and a buſhel of hair on his breaſt? I think they call him a ſerjeant.

Hab. They do.

Broad. Then, without let or delay, bring him hither, I pray thee.

Hab. I will about it this inſtant.

Broad. His admonition, perhaps, may prevail. Uſe diſpatch, I beſeech thee, friend Habakkuk.

Hab. As much as if I was poſting to the Treaſury, to obtain a large ſubſcription in a new loan, or a lottery.

Broad. Nay, then, friend, I have no reaſon to fear thee. [*Exeunt.*

The College.

Devil (*as* Hellebore, *the Preſident*), Camphire, Calomel *Secretary, and Pupils, diſcovered.*

Sec. The licentiates, Sir, will ſoon be at hand.

Hel. Let them!

Cal. We will do our duty, however; and, like the Patricians of old, receive with ſilence theſe Viſigoths in the ſenate.

Hel. I am not, Dr Calomel, of ſo pacific a turn: let us keep the evil out of doors, if we can; if not *vim vi*, repel force by force. Barricado the gates!

Sec. It is done.

Hel.

Hel. Are the buckets and fire-engine fetched from St Dunſtan's?

Sec. They have been here, Sir, this half-hour.

Hel. Let twelve apothecaries be placed at the pump, and their apprentices ſupply 'em with water!

Sec. Yes, Sir.

Hel. But let the engine be play'd by old Jollup, from James-ſtreet! Not one of the trade has a better hand at directing a pipe.

Sec. Mighty well, Sir.

Hel. In the time of ſiege, every citizen ought in duty to ſerve.—Having thus, brothers, provided a proper defence, let us coolly proceed to our buſineſs. Is there any body here, to demand a licence to-day?

Sec. A practitioner, Mr Preſident, out of the country.

Hel. Are the cuſtomary fees all diſcharged?

Sec. All, Sir.

Hel. Then let our cenſors, Dr Chriſtopher Camphire, and Dr Cornelius Calomel, introduce the petitioner for examination. [*Exeunt* Campire *and* Calomel.] After this duty is diſpatch'd, we will then read the College and ſtudents a lecture.

Enter Camphire *and* Calomel, *with* Laſt.

Laſt. Firſt, let me lay down my ſhoes.

[*They advance, with three bows, to the table.*

Hel. Let the candidate be placed on a ſtool. What's the Doctor's name?

Sec. Emanuel Laſt, Mr Preſident.

Hel. Dr Laſt, you have petitioned the College, to obtain a licence for the practice of phyſic; and though we have no doubt of your great ſkill and abilities, yet our duty compels us previouſly to aſk a few queſtions: What academy had the honour to form you?

Laſt. Anan!

Hel. We want to know the name of the place where you have ſtudied the ſcience of phyſic.

Laſt. Dunſtable.

Hel. That's ſome German Univerſity; ſo he can never belong to the College.

All. Never; oh, no.

Hel. Now, Sir, with regard to your phyſiological know-

ledge. By what means Dr Laſt, do you diſcover that a man is not well?

Laſt. By his complaint that he is ill.

Hel. Well replied! no ſurer prognoſtic.

All. None ſurer.

Hel. Then, as to recovering a ſubject that is ill—Can you venture to undertake the cure of an ague?

Laſt. With arra a man in the country.

Hel. By what means?

Laſt. By a charm.

Hel. And pray of what materials may that charm be compoſed?

Laſt. I won't tell; 'tis a ſecret.

Hel. Well replied! the College has no right to pry into ſecrets.

All. Oh, no; by no means.

Hel. But now, Dr Laſt, to proceed in due form; are you qualified to adminiſter remedies to ſuch diſeaſes as belong to the head?

Laſt. I believe I may.

Hel. Name ſome to the College.

Laſt. The tooth-ache.

Hel. What do you hold the beſt method to treat it?

Laſt. I pulls 'em up by the roots.

Hel. Well replied, brothers! that, without doubt, is a radical cure.

All. Without doubt.

Hel. Thus far as to the head: proceed we next to the middle! When, Dr Laſt, you are called in to a patient with a pain in his bowels, what then is your method of practice?

Laſt. I claps a trencher hot to the part.

Hel. Embrocation; very well! But if this application ſhould fail, what is the next ſtep that you take?

Laſt. I gi's a vomit and a purge.

Hel. Well replied! for it is plain there is a diſagreeable gueſt in the houſe; he has opened both doors; if he will go out at neither, it is none of his fault.

All. Oh, no; by no means.

Hel. We have now diſpatched the middle and head: come we finally to the other extremity, the feet! Are you equally ſkilful in the diſorders incidental to them?

Laſt. I believe I may.

Hel.

Hel. Name ſome.

Laſt. I have a great vogue all our way for curing of corns.

Hel. What are the means that you uſe?

Laſt. I cuts them out.

Hel. Well replied! extirpation: no better method of curing can be. Well, brethren, I think we may now, after this ſtrict and impartial enquiry, ſafely certify, that Dr Laſt, from top to toe, is an able phyſician.

All. Very able, very able, indeed.

Hel. And every way qualified to proceed in his practice.

All. Every way qualified.

Hel. You may deſcend, Dr Laſt. [Laſt *takes his ſeat among them.*] Secretary, firſt read, and then give the Doctor his licence.

Sec. [*Reads.*] "To all whom theſe preſents may come greeting. Know ye, that, after a moſt ſtrict and ſevere inquiſition, not only into the great ſkill and erudition, but the morals of Dr Emanuel Laſt, We are authoriſed to grant unto the ſaid Doctor full power, permiſſion, and licence, to pill, bolus, lotion, potion, draught, doſe, drench, purge, bleed, bliſter, cliſter, cup, ſcarify, ſyringe, ſalivate, couch, flux, ſweat, diet, dilute, tap, plaſter, and poultice, all perſons, in all diſeaſes, of all ages, conditions, and ſexes. And we do ſtrictly command and enjoin all ſurgeons, apothecaries, with their apprentices, all midwives, male, female, and nurſes, at all times, to be aiding and aſſiſting to the ſaid Dr Emanuel Laſt. And we do further charge all mayors, juſtices, aldermen, ſheriffs, bailiffs, head-boroughs, conſtables, and coroners, not to moleſt or intermeddle with the ſaid Doctor, if any party whom he ſhall ſo pill, bolus, lotion, potion, draught, doſe, drench, purge, bleed, bliſter, cliſter, cup, ſcarify, ſyringe, ſalivate, couch, flux, ſweat, diet, dilute, tap, plaſter, and poultice, ſhould happen to die, but to deem that the ſaid party died a natural death, any thing appearing to the contrary notwithſtanding. Given under our hands, &c. Hercules Hellebore, Cornelius Calomel, Chriſtopher Camphire."

Laſt. Then, if a patient die, they muſt not ſay that I kill'd him?

Hel. They ſay! Why, how ſhould they know, when it is not one time in twenty that we know it ourſelves?—Proced we now to the lecture! [*They all riſe and come forward to the table.*] Brethren, and ſtudents, I am going to open

open to you ſome notable diſcoveries that I have made, reſpecting the ſource, or primary cauſe, of all diſtempers incidental to the human machine: And theſe, brethren, I attribute to certain animalculæ, or piſcatory entities, that inſinuate themſelves thro' the pores into the blood, and in that fluid ſport, toſs, and tumble about, like mackarel or cod-fiſh in the great deep: and to convince you that this is not a mere *gratis dictum*, an hypotheſis only, I will give you demonſtrative proof. Bring hither the microſcope!

Enter a Servant with a microſcope.

Dr Laſt, regard this receiver. Take a peep.

Laſt. Where?

Hel. There. Thoſe two yellow drops there were drawn from a ſubject afflicted with the jaundice.—Well, what d'ye ſee?

Laſt. Some little creatures like yellow flies, that are hopping and ſkipping about.

Hel. Right. Thoſe yellow flies give the tinge to the ſkin, and undoubtedly cauſe the diſeaſe: and, now, for the cure! I adminiſter to every patient the two-and-fiftieth part of a ſcruple of the ovaria or eggs of the ſpider; theſe are thrown by the digeſtive powers into the ſecretory, there ſeparated from the alimentory, and then precipitated into the circulatory; where finding a proper nidus, or neſt, they quit their torpid ſtate, and vivify, and upon vivification, diſcerning the flies, their natural food, they immediately fall foul of them, extirpate the race out of the blood, and reſtore the patient to health.

Laſt. And what becomes of the ſpiders?

Hel. Oh, they die, you know, for want of nutrition.—Then I ſend the patient down to Brighthelmſtone; and a couple of dips in the ſalt water waſhes the cobwebs entirely out of the blood. Now, gentlemen, with reſpect to the—

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, Mr Forceps, from the hoſpital.

Hel. The hoſpital! is this a time to—

Enter Forceps.

Well, Forceps, what's your will?

For. To know, Sir, what you would have done with the hoſpital patients to-day?

Hel.

Hel. To-day! why, what was done yeſterday?

For. Sir, we bled the weſt ward, and jalloped the north.

Hel. Did ye? why, then, bleed the north ward, and jallop the weſt to-day. [*Exit* Forceps.] Now, I ſay, brethren—

Enter a Servant.

Serv. The licentiates are drawn up at the gate.

Hel. Who leads 'em?

Serv. They are led on by Sligo: they demand inſtant entrance, and threaten to ſtorm.

Hel. Doctors Calomel and Camphire, our two aid-de-camps, ſurvey their preſent poſture, and report it to us.

Without. Huzza!

Hel. Bid old Jollup be ready to unmaſk the engine at the word of command.

Enter Camphire.

Hel. Now, Dr Camphire?

Camp. The ſledge-hammers are come, and they prepare to batter in breach.

Hel. Let the engine be play'd off at the very firſt blow! [*Exit* Camphire.

Without. Huzza!

Enter Calomel.

Hel. Now, Doctor?

Cal. The firſt fire has demoliſhed Dr Fingerfee's foretop.

Hel. That's well. [*Exit* Calomel.

Enter Camphire.

Now, Doctor?

Camp. The ſecond fire has dropped the ſtiff buckles of Dr Oſaſafras.

Hel. Better and better. [*Exit* Camphire.

Enter Calomel.

Now, Doctor?

Cal. Both the knots of Dr Anodyne's tye are diſſolved.

Hel. Beſt of all! [*Exit* Calomel.

Enter Camphire.

Now, Doctor?

Camp.

Camp. As Dr Sligo, with open mouth, drove furiouſly on, he received a full ſtream in his teeth, and is retired from the field, dropping wet.

Hel. Then the day's our own. [*Exit* Camphire.

Enter Calomel.

Now, Doctor?

Cal. All is loſt! Dr Sligo, recruited by a bumper of Drogheda, is returned with freſh vigour.

Hel. Let our force be pointed at him. [*Exit* Calomel.

Enter Camphire.

Now, Doctor?

Camp. The ſiege ſlackens; Dr Broadbrim, with Serjeant Demur, are arrived in the camp. [*Exit.*

Hel. What can that mean?

Enter Calomel.

Now, Doctor?

Cal. Serjeant Demur has thrown this manifeſto over the gate. [*Exit.*

Hel. [*looking at the parchment.*] Ha! "Middleſex to wit. John Doe and Richard Roe." It is a challenge to meet 'em at Weſtminſter-Hall; then we have breathing-time till the term.

Enter Laſt.

Now, Doctor?

Laſt. I have forgot my ſhoes. [*Takes them up, and exit.*

Hel. Oh!

Enter Camphire.

Camp. The licentiates file off towards Fleet-ſtreet.

Hel. Follow all, and haraſs the rear! leave not a dry thread among them! Huzza! [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter Devil, Invoice, *and* Harriet.

Devil. Well, my young friends, you will now be naturally led to Weſtm—Oh!

Inv. Bleſs me, Sir, what's the matter? You change colour, and falter.

Devil. The magician at Madrid has diſcovered my flight, and

and recalls me by an irreſiſtible ſpell: I muſt leave you, my friends!

Inv. Forbid it, Fortune! it is now, Sir, that we moſt want your aid.

Devil. He muſt, he will be obeyed. Hereafter, perhaps, I may rejoin you again.

Inv. But, Sir, what can we do? how live? what plan can we fix on for our future ſupport?

Devil. You are in a country where your talents, with a little application, will procure you a proviſion.

Inv. But which way to direct them?

Devil. There are profitable profeſſions that require but little ability.

Inv. Name us one.

Devil. What think you of the trade with whoſe badge I am at preſent inveſted?

Inv. Can you ſuppoſe, Sir, after what I have ſeen—

Devil. Oh, Sir, I don't deſign to engage you in any perſonal ſervice; I would only recommend it to you to be the vender of ſome of thoſe infallible remedies, with which our newſpapers are conſtantly crowded?

Inv. You know, Sir, I am poſſeſſed of no ſecret.

Devil. Nor they either: a few ſimple waters, dignified with titles that catch, no matter how wild and abſurd, will effectually anſwer your purpoſe: as, let me ſee now! Tincture of Tinder, Eſſence of Eggſhell, or Balſam of Broomſtick.

Inv. You muſt excuſe me, Sir; I can never ſubmit.

Devil. I think you are rather too ſqueamiſh. What ſay you, then, to a little ſpiritual quackery?

Inv. Spiritual?

Devil. Oh, Sir, there are in this town mountebanks for the mind, as well as the body. How ſhould you like mounting a cart on a common, and becoming a Methodiſt preacher?

Inv. Can that ſcheme turn to account?

Devil. Nothing better: believe me, the abſolute direction of the perſons and purſes of a large congregation, however low their conditions and callings, is by no means a contemptible object. I, for my own part, can ſay, what the conqueror of Perſia ſaid to the Cynic; "If I was not Alexander, I would be Diogenes:" ſo, if I was not the Devil, I would chuſe to be a Methodiſt preacher.

Inv.

Inv. But then the reſtraint, the forms, I ſhall be obliged to obſerve.

Devil. None at all: there is, in the whole catalogue, but one ſin you need be at all ſhy of committing.

Inv. What's that?

Devil. Simony.

Inv. Simony! I don't comprehend you.

Devil. Simony, Sir, is a new kind of canon, deviſed by theſe upſtart fanatics, that makes it ſinful not to abuſe the confidence, and piouſly plunder the little property of an indigent man, and his family.

Inv. A moſt noble piece of caſuiſtical cookery, and exceeds even the ſons of Ignatius! But this honour I muſt beg to decline.

Devil. What think you then of trying the ſtage? You are a couple of good theatrical figures; but how are your talents? can you ſing?

Inv. I can't boaſt of much ſkill, Sir; but Miſs Harriet got great reputation in Spain.

Har. Oh, Mr Invoice! My father, Sir, as we ſeldom went out, eſtabliſhed a domeſtic kind of drama, and made us perform ſome little muſical pieces, that were occaſionally ſent us from England.

Devil. Come, Sir, will you give us a taſte of your—juſt a ſhort—*te ti te tor.* [*Sings a ſhort preludio.*

Inv. I muſt beg to be excuſed, Sir; I have not a muſical note in my voice, that can pleaſe you.

Devil. No? Why, then, I believe we muſt trouble the lady: come, Miſs, I'll charm a band to accompany you. [*Waves his ſtick.*

[Harriet *ſings.*]

Devil. Exceedingly well! You have nothing to do now, but to offer yourſelves to one of the houſes.

Inv. And which, Sir, would you recommend?

Devil. Take your choice; for I can ſerve you in neither.

Inv. No? I thought, Sir, you told me juſt now, that the ſeveral arts of the drama were under your direction.

Devil. So they were formerly; but now they are directed by the genius of Inſipidity: he has entered into partnerſhip with the managers of both houſes, and they have ſet up a kind of circulating library, for the vending of dialogue novels.

novels. I dare not go near the new houſe, for the demon of Power, who gave me this lameneſs, has poſſeſſed the pates, and ſown diſcord among the mock monarchs there; and what one receives, the other rejects. And as to the other houſe, the manager has great merit himſelf, with ſkill to diſcern, and candour to allow it in others; but I can be of no uſe in making your bargain, for in that he would be too many for the cunningeſt devil amongſt us.

Inv. I have heard of a new play-houſe in the Haymarket.

Devil. What, Foote's? Oh, that's an eccentric, narrow eſtabliſhment; a mere ſummer fly! He! But, however, it may do for a *coup d'eſſai*, and prove no bad foundation for a future engagement.

Inv. Then we will try him, if you pleaſe.

Devil. By all means: and you may do it this inſtant; he opens to-night, and will be glad of your aſſiſtance.—I'll drop you down at the door; and muſt then take my leave for ſome time. *Allons!* but don't tremble; you have nothing to fear: the public will treat you with kindneſs; at leaſt, if they ſhew but half the indulgence to you that they have upon all occaſions ſhewn to that manager.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

NABOB;

A COMEDY,

IN

THREE ACTS.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr FOOTE, at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, Nov. 19. 1771.

UPWARDS of twenty years are fled and waſted
Since in this ſpot your favour firſt I taſted.
Urg'd by your ſmiles thro' various realms to roam,
The Muſe now brings her motely cargo home;
For frugal Nature, with an equal hand,
Beſtows peculiar gifts to every land.
To France ſhe gave her rapid repartee,
Bows, and *bons mots*, fibs, faſhions, flattery,
Shrugs, grins, grimace, and ſportive gaiety:
Arm'd with the whole artillery of love,
Latium's ſoft ſons poſſeſs the powers to move:
Humour, the foremoſt of the feſtive crew,
Source of the comic ſcene, ſhe gave to you;
Humour, with arched brow, and leering eye,
Shrewd, ſolemn, ſneering, ſubtile, ſlow and ſly;
Serious herſelf, yet laughter ſtill provoking,
By teaſing, tickling, jeering, gibing, joking:
Impartial gift, that owns nor rank nor birth!
'Tis theirs who rule the realm, or till the earth;
Theirs who in ſenates wage the wordy war,
And theirs whoſe humble lot conducts the car:
If aught deriv'd from her adorns my ſtrain,
You gave, at leaſt diſcover'd firſt, the vein.
Should wide experience, or maturing age,
Have brought or mirth or moral to the ſtage,
To you, the patrons of the wilder ſong,
The chaſter notes in juſtice muſt belong:
But ſhould infirmities with time conſpire
My force to weaken, or abate my fire,
Leſs entertainment may ariſe to you,
But to myſelf leſs danger will enſue.
If age contracts my muſcles, ſhrills my tone,
No man will claim thoſe foibles as his own;
Nor, if I halt or hobble thro' the ſcene,
Malice point out what citizen I mean:
No foe I fear more than a legal fury,
Unleſs I gain this circle for my jury.

DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Mathew Mite, — —	Mr FOOTE.
Sir John Oldham, — —	Mr GENTLEMAN.
Mr Thomas Oldham, — —	Mr AICKIN.
Young Oldham, — —	Mr DU-BELLAMY.
Mr Mayor, — —	Mr PARSONS.
Touchit, — —	Mr BADDELEY.
Firſt Antiquarian, — —	Mr LLOYD.
Second Antiquarian, — —	Mr HAMILTON.
Secretary, — —	Mr DAVIS.
Rapine, — —	Mr LINGS.
Nathan, — —	Mr CASTLE.
Moſes, — —	Mr JACOBS.
Janus, Putty, — —	Mr WESTON.
Conſerve, — —	Mr FEARON.
Waiter, — —	Mr WARD.

Lady Oldham, — —	Mrs EGERTON.
Sophy, — —	Miſs AMBROSE.
Mrs Match'em, — —	Mrs GARDNER.
Crocus, — —	Miſs CRAVEN.

Beadle, Servants, &c.

ACT I.

ACT I.

A Chamber.

Enter Lady Oldham *and* Sir John Oldham.

Lady Old. NOT a ſyllable more will I hear!

Sir John. Nay, but, my dear—

Lady Old. I am amazed, Sir John, at your meanneſs! or that you could ſubmit to give his paltry propoſals ſo much as a reading!

Sir John. Nay, my dear, what would you have had me done?

Lady Old. Done? returned them with the contempt they deſerved. But, come, unfold! I am calm: reveal the pretty project your precious head has produced.

Sir John. Nay, my dear, as to that, my head produced—

Lady Old. Nay, I don't wonder that ſhame has tied up your tongue! But, come; I will ſpare the confuſion; and tell you what you would ſay. Here, Lady Oldham, Sir Matthew Mite has juſt ſent me a letter, modeſtly deſiring that, in return for the ruin he has brought on me and my houſe, I would be ſo kind as to beſtow upon him my darling daughter, the hopes of my—And is it poſſible you can be mean enough to think of ſuch an alliance? Will you, Sir John, oblige me with an anſwer to a few ſhort queſtions?

Sir John. Without doubt.

Lady Old. I ſuppoſe you conſider yourſelf as ſprung from a family at leaſt as ancient as any in the county you live in?

Sir John. That, I fancy, will not be denied.

Lady Old. Nor was it, I fancy, diſhonoured by an alliance with mine?

Sir John. My Lady, the very reverſe.

Lady Old. You ſucceeded, Sir, to a patrimony, which though the liberal and hoſpitable ſpirit of your predeceſſors would not ſuffer to encreaſe, yet their prudence took care ſhould never be diminiſhed?

Sir John. True.

Lady Old. From the public and private virtues of your anceſtors,

anceſtors, the inhabitants of the neighbouring borough thought their beſt and deareſt intereſts in no hands ſo ſecure as in theirs?

Sir John. Right.

Lady Old. Nor till lately were they ſo tainted by the faſhion of the times, as to adopt the egregious abſurdity, That to be faithfully ſerved and protected above, it was neceſſary to be largely bribed and corrupted below?

Sir John. Why, I can't ſay, except now and then a bit of veniſon, or an annual dinner, they have ever put me to any great—

Lady Old. Indulge me yet a moment, Sir John! In this happy ſituation, did the laſt year cheerfully cloſe; our condition, though not opulent, affluent, and you happy in the quiet poſſeſſion of your family honours.

Sir John. There is no gainſaying of that.

Lady Old. Now, look at the diſmal ſhocking reverſe!

Sir John. There is but too much reaſon in what your Ladyſhip ſays.

Lady Old. And conſider, at the ſame time, to whom you are obliged.

Sir John. Why, what could we do? your Ladyſhip knows there was nobody more againſt my giving up than yourſelf.

Lady Old. Let me proceed. At this criſis, preceded by all the pomp of Aſia, Sir Matthew Mite, from the Indies, came thundering amongſt us; and, profuſely ſcattering the ſpoils of ruined provinces, corrupted the virtue and alienated the affections of all the old friends to the family.

Sir John. That is nothing but truth.

Lady Old. Compelled by the ſame means to defend thoſe that were employed in attacking your intereſt, you have been obliged deeply to incumber your fortune; his ſuperior addreſs has procured a return; and probably your petition will complete the ruin his oppoſition began.

Sir John. Let us hope all for the beſt.

Lady Old. And who can tell, but you may be ſoon forced to part with your patrimony to the very inſolent worthleſs individual, who has been the author of your diſtreſs?

Sir John. I would ſooner periſh, my Lady!

Lady Old. Parallel inſtances may be produced; nor is it at all unlikely, but Sir Matthew, taking a liking to your family

family manſion, has purſued this very method to compel you to ſell it.

Sir John. It is, my dear, to avoid this neceſſity that I wiſh you to give his letter a reading.

Lady Old. Is it poſſible, not to mention the meanneſs, that you can be weak enough to expect any real ſervice from that infamous quarter?

Sir John. Who can tell, my love, but a conſciouſneſs of the miſchief he has done us, may have roufed ſome feelings that—

Lady Old. His feelings! will he liſten to a private complaint, who has been deaf to the cries of a people? or drop a tear for particular diſtreſs, who owes his riſe to the ruin of thouſands?

Sir John. Well, Lady Oldham, I find all that I ſay ſignifies nothing.—But here comes brother Thomas; two heads are better than one; let us take his opinion, my love.

Lady Old. What need of any opinion? the caſe is too clear; nor indeed, if there had been a neceſſity for conſulting another, ſhould I have have thought your brother the propereſt man to adviſe with on the occaſion.

Sir John. And why not? there is not a merchant whoſe judgment would be ſooner taken.

Lady Old. Perhaps not, on the value of merchandize, or the goodneſs of a bill of exchange: but there is a nicety, a delicacy, an elevation of ſentiment, in this caſe, which people who have narrowed their notions with commerce, and conſidered during the courſe of their lives their intereſt alone, will ſcarce comprehend.

Enter Mr Thomas Oldham.

Tho. So, ſiſter! what! upon your old topic, I find?

Lady Old. Sir!

Tho. Some pretty compariſons, I ſuppoſe, not much to the honour of trade.

Lady Old. Nay, brother, you know I have always allowed merchants to be a uſeful body of men; and conſidered commerce, in this country, as a pretty reſource enough for the younger ſhoots of a family.

Tho. Exceedingly condeſcending, indeed! And yet, ſiſter, I could produce you ſome inſtances where the younger

ſhoots have flouriſhed and throve, when the reverend trunk has decayed.

Lady Old. Perhaps, brother Thomas—

Tho. Nay, nay, don't let us revive our ancient diſputes!—You ſeem warm; no miſunderſtanding, I hope?

Sir John. No, no; none in the leaſt: you know, my Lady's temper's apt to be lively now and then.

Tho. Nay, ſiſter—But, come! what has occaſioned this mighty debate?

Sir John. You know, brother, how affairs ſtand between Sir Matthew and us.

Tho. Well!

Sir John. He has ſent us here a kind of a compromiſe; I don't know well what to call it; a ſort of a treaty.

Tho. That in your hand?

Sir John. Yes; and I can't prevail on my Lady to give it a reading.

Tho. And why not?

Lady Old. To what end?

Tho. A very natural one; in order to know the contents.

Lady Old. Of what importance can they be to us?

Tho. That the letter will tell you. But ſurely, Lady Oldham, you are rather too nice. Give it me!

Sir John. Is it your Ladyſhip's pleaſure?

Tho. Pſha! here's a rout, indeed!—One would be apt to ſuſpect that the packet was peſtilential, and came from the Archipelago, inſtead of the Indies. Now let us ſee what this formidable memorial contains! [*opens the letter.*

"To Sir John Oldham. Sir Matthew Mite having lately "ſeen, at Lady Levant's rout, the eldeſt Miſs Oldham, "and being ſtruck with her perſonal charms, propoſes to "her father the following treaty."

Lady Old. A very monarchical addreſs!

Tho. "*Imprimis;* Upon a matrimonial union between "the young lady and him, all hoſtilities and contention "ſhall ceaſe, and Sir John be ſuffered to take his ſeat in "ſecurity."

Lady Old. That he will do, without an obligation to him.

Tho. Are you, ſiſter, certain of that?

Lady Old. You don't harbour the leaſt doubt of our merits?

Tho. But do they always prevail?

Lady Old.

Lady Old. There is now, brother Thomas, no danger to dread; the reſtraint the popular part of government has in this inſtance laid on itſelf, at the ſame time that it does honour to them, diſtributes equal juſtice to all.

Tho. And are you aware what the expence will be to obtain it?—But, pray, let me proceed!—"Secondly, as "Sir Matthew is bent upon a large territorial acquiſition "in England, and Sir John Oldham's finances are at pre- "ſent a little out of repair, Sir Matthew Mite will make "up the money already advanced in another name, by "way of future mortgage upon his eſtate, for the entire "purchaſe, five lacks of roupees."

Lady Old. Now, Sir John! was I right in my gueſs?

Sir John. Your Ladyſhip is never out.—But, brother Thomas, theſe ſame lacks—to what may they amount?

Tho. Sixty thouſand, at leaſt.

Sir John. No inconſiderable offer, my Lady.

Lady Old. Contemptible! But pray, Sir, proceed.

Tho. "Or if it ſhould be more agreeable to the parties, "Sir Matthew will ſettle upon Sir John and his Lady, for "their joint lives, a jagghire."

Sir John. A jagghire?

Tho. The term is Indian, and means an annual income.

Lady Old. What ſtrange jargon he deals in!

Tho. His ſtile is a little Oriental, I muſt own; but moſt exceedingly clear.

Lady Old. Yes, to Coſſim Ali-Khan, or Mier Jaffeir. I hope you are near the concluſion.

Tho. But two articles more. [*reads.*] "And that the "principals may have no cares for the younger parts of "their family, Sir Matthew will, at his own expence, "tranſport the two young ladies, Miſs Oldham's two "ſiſters, to Madras or Calcutta, and there procure them "ſuitable huſbands."

Lady Old. Madras, or Calcutta!

Tho. Your patience, dear ſiſter!—"And as for the "three boys, they ſhall be either made ſupercargoes, ſhips' "huſbands, or go out cadets and writers in the Company's "ſervice."

Lady Old. Why, he treats my children like a parcel of convicts: Is this their method of ſupplying their ſettlements?

Tho. This, with now and then a little kidnapping, dear ſiſter.

ſiſter.—Well, Madam, you have now the means of getting rid of all your offspring at once: did not I tell you the paper was worth your peruſal? You will reply to his wiſh; you can have no doubts, I ſuppoſe.

Lady Old. Not the leaſt, as I will ſhew you. [*Tears the letter.*] And, if Sir John has the leaſt ſpirit or pride, he will treat the inſolent principal as I do his propoſals.

Tho. But that method, as things ſtand, may not be altogether ſo ſafe. I am ſorry you were ſo haſty in deſtroying the letter: if I remember rightly, there is mention made of advancing money in another man's name.

Lady Old. We have been compelled to borrow, I own; but I had no conception that he was the lender.

Tho. That's done by a common contrivance; not a country lawyer but knows the doctrine of transfer.—How much was the ſum?

Sir John. Ten thouſand pounds.

Tho. And what, Sir John, were the terms?

Sir John. As I could give no real ſecurity, my eſtate being ſettled till my ſon John comes of age, I found myſelf obliged to comply with all that was aſked.

Tho. A judgment, no doubt.

Sir John. They divided the ſum, and I gave them a couple.

Tho. Which will affect not only your perſon, but perſonal property; ſo they are both in his power.

Sir John. Too true, I am afraid!

Tho. And you may be ſent to a gaol, and your family turned into the ſtreets, whenever he pleaſes.

Lady Old. How! Heaven forbid!

Tho. Not the leaſt doubt can be made.—This is an artful project: no wonder that ſo much contrivance and cunning has been an overmatch for a plain Engliſh gentleman, or an innocent Indian. And what is now to be done? Does your daughter Sophy know of this letter?

Lady Old. Sir John?

Sir John. It reached my hands not ten minutes ago.

Tho. I had ſome reaſon to think, that, had you complied, you would not have found her very eager to ſecond your wiſhes.

Lady Old. I don't know that, brother: young girls are eaſily caught with titles and ſplendour; magnificence has a kind of magic for them.

Tho.

Tho. I have a better opinion of Sophy. You know, Lady Oldham, I have often hinted, that my boy was fond of his couſin; and poſſibly my niece not totally averſe to his wiſh; but you have always ſtopped me ſhort, under a notion that the children were too nearly allied.

Lady Old. Why, brother, don't you think—

Tho. But that, ſiſter, was not the right reaſon; you could have eaſily digeſted the *couſins*, but the *compting-houſe* ſtuck in his way: your favourite maxim has been, that citizens are a diſtinct race, a ſort of creatures that ſhould mix with each other.

Lady Old. Bleſs me, brother, you can't conceive that I—

Tho. Nay, no apology, good Lady Oldham! perhaps you have a higher alliance in view; and let us now conſider what is to be done. You are totally averſe to this treaty?

Lady Old. Can that be a queſtion?

Tho. Some little management is neceſſary, as to the mode of rejection: as matters now ſtand, it would not be prudent to exaſperate Sir Matthew.

Lady Old. Let Sir John diſcharge the debt due to him at once.

Tho. But where ſhall we get materials?

Lady Old. Can that be a difficult taſk?

Tho. Exceedingly ſo, as I apprehend: but few can be found to advance ſo large a ſum on ſuch ſlender ſecurity; nor is it to be expected, indeed, unleſs from a friend to relieve, or a foe to ruin.

Lady Old. Is it poſſible Sir Matthew can have acted from ſo infernal a motive, to have advanced the money with a view of diſtreſſing us deeper?

Tho. Sir Matthew is a profound politician, and will not ſtick at trifles to carry his point.

Lady Old. With the wealth of the Eaſt, we have too imported the worſt of its vices. What a horrid crew!

Tho. Hold, ſiſter! don't gratify your reſentment at the expence of your juſtice; a general concluſion from a ſingle inſtance is but indifferent logic.

Lady Old. Why, is not this Sir Matthew—

Tho. Perhaps as bad a ſubject as your paſſion can paint him: but there are men from the Indies, and many too, with whom I have the honour to live, who diſpenſe nobly and

and with hoſpitality here, what they have acquired with honour and credit elſewhere; and, at the ſame time they have increaſed the dominions and wealth, have added virtues too to their country.

Lady Old. Perhaps ſo: but what is to be done? Suppoſe I was to wait on Sir Matthew myſelf.

Tho. If your Ladyſhip is ſecure of commanding your temper.

Sir John. Mercy on us, brother Thomas, there's no ſuch thing as truſting to that!

Lady Old. You are always very obliging, Sir John! if the embaſſy was to be executed by you—

Tho. Come, come, to end the diſpute, I will undertake the commiſſion myſelf.

Lady Old. You will take care, brother, to make no conceſſions that will derogate from—

Tho. Your dignity, in my hands, will have nothing to fear.—But ſhould not I ſee my niece firſt? ſhe ought to be conſulted, I think.

Sir John. By all means.

Tho. For, if ſhe approves of the knight, I don't ſee any thing in the alliance ſo much to be dreaded.

Lady Old. I will ſend Sophy to her uncle directly; but I deſire the girl may be left to herſelf; no undue influence! [*Exit.*

Tho. The caution was needleſs.

Sir John. Why, really, now, brother, but that my lady's too warm, I don't ſee any thing ſo very unreaſonable in this ſame paper here that lies ſcattered about. But, I forget, did he mention any thing of any fortune he was to have with the girl?

Tho. Pho! a paltry conſideration, below his concern.

Sir John. My lady herſelf muſt own there is ſomething generous in that.

Tho. Will you ſtay and repreſent the caſe to Sophy yourſelf?

Sir John. She is here!

Enter Sophy.

Your uncle, child, has ſomething to ſay to you: you know he loves you, my dear, and will adviſe you for the beſt. [*Exit.*

Tho. Come hither, Sophy, my love! don't be alarmed.

I ſuppoſe my lady has opened to you, that Sir Matthew has ſent a ſtrange kind of a romantic letter.

Sophy. But ſhe did not ſeem, Sir, to ſuppoſe that it deſerved much attention.

Tho. As matters now ſtand, perhaps more than ſhe thinks. But come, my good girl, be explicit: ſuppoſe the affairs of your family ſhould demand a compliance with this whimſical letter, ſhould you have any reluctance to the union propoſed?

Sophy. Me, Sir? I never ſaw the gentleman but once in my life.

Tho. And I don't think that would intereſt you much in his favour.

Sophy. Sir!

Tho. No prepoſſeſſion? no prior object that has attracted your notice?

Sophy. I hope, Sir, my behaviour has not occaſioned this queſtion.

Tho. Oh, no, my dear; it naturally took its riſe from the ſubject. Has your couſin lately been here?

Sophy. Sir!

Tho. Tom Oldham, my ſon?

Sophy. We generally ſee him, Sir, every day.

Tho. I am glad to hear that: I was afraid ſome improper attachment had drawn him from the city ſo often of late.

Sophy. Improper! I dare ſay, Sir, you will have nothing of that kind to fear from my couſin.

Tho. I hope not: and yet I have had my ſuſpicions, I own; but not unlikely you can remove 'em: children rarely make confidants of their fathers.

Sophy. Sir!

Tho. Similarity of ſentiments, nearneſs of blood, and the ſame ſeaſon of life, perhaps, may have induced him to unboſom to you.

Sophy. Do you ſuppoſe, Sir, that he would diſcover to me, what he choſe to conceal from ſo affectionate a father?

Tho. Nay, prithee, Sophy, don't be grave! What, do you imagine I ſhould think his preferring your ear to mine, for a melting paſſionate tale, any violent breach of his duty?

Sophy. You are merry, Sir.

Tho. And who knows but you might repay the communication

nication with a ſimilar ſtory? You bluſh, Sophy.

Sophy. You are really pleaſed to be ſo very particular, that I ſcarce know what anſwer to make.

Tho. Come, my good niece, I will perplex you no longer: my ſon has concealed nothing from me; and did the completion of your wiſhes depend on my approbation alone, you would have but little to fear: but my lady's notions are ſo very peculiar, you know, and all her principles ſo determined and fixed—

Sophy. The merits of my couſin, which ſhe herſelf is not ſlow to acknowledge, and time, might, I ſhould hope, ſoften my mother.

Tho. Why then, my dear niece, leave it to time, in moſt caſes the ableſt phyſician. But let your partiality for Tom be a ſecret!—I muſt now endeavour to learn when I can obtain an audience from Sir Matthew.

Sophy. An audience from *him?*

Tho. Yes, child; theſe new gentlemen, who from the caprice of fortune, and a ſtrange chain of events, have acquired immoderate wealth, and roſe to uncontroled power abroad, find it difficult to deſcend from their dignity, and admit of any equal at home. Adieu, my dear niece! But keep up your ſpirits! I think I foreſee an event that will produce ſome change in our favour. [*Exeunt.*

Sir Matthew Mite's *Hall.*

Janus *and* Conſerve *diſcovered.*

Conſ. I own the place of a porter, if one can bear the confinement—And then, Sir Matthew has the character of —[*low tap.*] Uſe no ceremony, Mr Janus; mind your door, I beſeech you.

Jan. No hurry! keep your ſeat, Mr Conſerve; it's only the tap of a tradeſman: I make thoſe people ſtay till they collect in a body, and ſo let in eight or ten at a time; it ſaves trouble.

Conſ. And how do they brook it?

Jan. Oh, wonderfully well, here with us. In my laſt place, indeed, I thought myſelf bound to be civil; for as all the poor devils could get was good words, it would have been hard to have been ſparing of them.

Conſ.

Conſ. Very conſiderate!

Jan. But here we are rich; and as the fellows don't wait for their money, it is but fair they ſhould wait for admittance.

Conſ. Or they would be apt to forget their condition.

Jan. True.

Conſ. Upon the whole, then, you do not regret leaving my Lord?

Jan. No; Lord Levee's place had its ſweets, I confeſs; perquiſites pretty enough: but what could I do? they wanted to give me a rider.

Conſ. A rider?

Jan. Yes; to quarter Monſieur Friſſart, my Lady's valet de chambre, upon me; ſo you know I could not but in honour reſign.

Conſ. No; there was no bearing to be rid by a Frenchman; there was no ſtaying in after that.

Jan. It would have been quoted as a precedent againſt the whole corps.

Conſ. Yes. Pox on 'em! our maſters are damned fond of encroachments. Is your preſent duty ſevere?

Jan. I drudge pretty much at the door; but that, you know, is mere bodily labour: but then, my mind is at eaſe; not obliged to rack my brain for invention.

Conſ. No?

Jan. No; not near the lying here, as in my laſt place.

Conſ. I ſuppoſe not, as your maſter is but newly in town; but you muſt expect that branch to encreaſe.

Jan. When it does, I ſhall inſiſt the door be done by a deputy. [*Two raps.*

Conſ. Hark! to your poſt!

Jan. No; ſit ſtill! that is ſome aukward body out of the city; one of our people from Leadenhall-ſtreet; perhaps a director; I ſha'n't ſtir for him.

Conſ. Not for a director? I thought he was the commanding officer, the Great Captain's captain.

Jan. No, no; quite the reverſe; the tables are turned, Mr Conſerve: in acknowledgment for appointing us their ſervants abroad, we are ſo obliging as to make them directors at home. [*A loud rapping.*

Conſ. That rap will rouſe you, I think.

Jan. Let me take a peep at the wicket. Oh, oh! is it you, with a pox to you? How the deuce came your long

legs to find the way hither?—I ſhall be in no haſte to open for you.

Conſ. Who is it?

Jan. That eternal teazer, Sir Timothy Tallboy. When once he gets footing, there is no ſuch thing as keeping him out.

Conſ. What, you know him then?

Jan. Yes, rot him, I know him too well! he had like to have loſt me the beſt place I ever had in my life.

Conſ. How ſo?

Jan. Lord Lofty had given orders on no account to admit him. The firſt time, he got by me under a pretence of ſtroking Keeper the houſe-dog; the next, he nick'd me by deſiring only juſt leave to ſcratch the poll of the parrot, Poll, Poll, Poll! I thought the devil was in him if he deceived me a third; but he did, notwithſtanding.

Conſ. Prithee, Janus, how?

Jan. By begging to ſet his watch by Tompion's clock in the hall; I ſmoaked his deſign, and laid hold of him here: [*taking hold of his coat.*] As ſure as you are alive, he made but one leap from the ſtairs to the ſtudy, and left the ſkirt of his coat in my hand?

Conſ. You got rid of him then?

Jan. He made one attempt more; and, for fear he ſhould ſlip by me (for you know he is as thin as a ſlice of beef at Marybone-Gardens), I ſlapped the door in his face, and told him, the dog was mad, the parrot dead, and the clock ſtood; and, thank heaven, I have never ſet eyes on him ſince. [*Knock louder.*

Conſ. But the door!

Jan. Time enough.—You had no particular commands, Mr Conſerve?

Conſ. Only to let you know that Betſy Robins has a rout and ſupper on Sunday next.

Jan. Conſtant ſtill, Mr Conſerve, I ſee. I am afraid I can't come to cards; but ſhall be ſure to attend the repaſt. A nick-nack, I ſuppoſe?

Conſ. Yes, yes; we all contribute, as uſual: the ſubſtantials from Alderman Sirloin's; Lord Frippery's cook finds fricaſees and ragouts; Sir Robert Bumper's butler is to ſend in the wine; and I ſhall ſupply the deſert.

Jan. There are a brace of birds and a hare, that I cribbed this morning out of a baſket of game.

Conſ.

Conſ. They will be welcome.—[*Knock louder.*] But the folks grow impatient!

Jan. They muſt ſtay till I come.—At the old place, I ſuppoſe?

Conſ. No; I had like to have forgot! Betſy grew ſick of St Paul's, ſo I have taken her a houſe amongſt the new buildings; both the air and the company is better.

Jan. Right.

Conſ. To ſay truth, the ſituation was diſagreeable on many accounts. Do you know, though I took care few people ſhould behave better at Chriſtmas, that becauſe he thought her a citizen, the houſekeeper of Drury-Lane Theatre, when his maſter mounted, refuſed her a ſide-box?

Jan. No wonder Miſs Betſy was bent upon moving.—What is the name of her ſtreet?

Conſ. Rebel-Row: it was built by a meſſenger who made his market in the year forty-five. But ſhall Miſs Robins ſend you a card?

Jan. No, no; I ſhall eaſily find out the place. [*Knock.* Now let us ſee; who have we here? Gads my life, Mrs Match'em! my maſter's amorous agent: it is as much as my place is worth to let her wait for a minute.

[*Opens the door.* *Exit* Conſerve.

Enter Mrs Match'em, *ſome Tradeſpeople, who bow low to* Janus, *and* Thomas Oldham.

Match. So, Sir! this is pretty treatment, for a woman like me to dangle at your gate, ſurrounded by a parcel of tradeſpeople!

Jan. I beg pardon; but, Madam—

Match. Suppoſe any of my ladies had chanced to drive by; in a pretty ſituation they'd have ſeen me! I promiſe you I ſhall make my complaints to Sir Matthew.

Jan. I was receiving ſome particular commands from my maſter.

Match. I ſhall know that from him. Where is he? let him know I muſt ſee him directly; my hands are ſo full I have not a moment to ſpare.

Jan. At that door the groom of the chamber will take you in charge; I am ſure you'll be admitted as ſoon as announced.

Match.

Match. There is as much difficulty to get a ſight of this ſignior, as of a member when the Parliament's diſſolved! [*Exit.*

Jan. Soh! what, you have brought in your bills? damned punctual, no doubt! The ſteward's room is below.—And, do you hear? when you are paid, be ſure to ſneak away without ſeeing me.

All Tradeſ. We hope you have a better opinion—

Jan. Well, well, march! [*Exeunt Tradeſmen.*] So, friend; what is your buſineſs, pray?

Tho. I have a meſſage to deliver to Sir Matthew.

Jan. You have? and pray what is the purport?

Tho. That's for his ear alone.

Jan. You will find yourſelf miſtaken in that.

Tho. How?

Jan. It muſt make its way to his, by paſſing thro' mine.

Tho. Is that the rule of the houſe?

Jan. Ay; and the beſt way to avoid idle and impertinent pratlers.

Tho. And of that you are to judge?

Jan Or I ſhould not be fit for my poſt. But, you are very importunate; who are you? I ſuppoſe a Jew broker, come to bring my maſter the price of the ſtocks?

Tho. No.

Jan. Or ſome country couſin, perhaps?

Tho. Nor that neither.

Jan. Or a voter from our borough below? we never admit them but againſt an election.

Tho. Still wide of the mark.—[*Aſide.*] There is but one way of managing here; I muſt give the Cerberus a ſop, I perceive.—Sir, I have really buſineſs with Sir Matthew, of the utmoſt importance; and if you can obtain me an interview, I ſhall think myſelf extremely obliged. [*Gives money.*

Jan. As I ſee, Sir, by your manner, that it is a matter of moment, we will try what can be done; but you muſt wait for his levee; there is no ſeeing him yet.

Tho. No?

Jan. He is too buſy at preſent; the waiter at Almack's has juſt brought him home his macaroni dreſs for the hazard-table, and is inſtructing him to throw the dice with a grace.

Tho. Then where can I wait?

Jan

Jan. If you will ſtep into that room, I will take care to call you in time. [*Exit* Mr Oldham.]—*Looking at the money*]. A good ſenſible fellow! At firſt ſight, how eaſily one may be miſtaken in men! [*Exit.*

ACT II.

A Chamber. Sir Matthew Mite *in his gaming dreſs, a Waiter attending.*

Mite. MAIN and chance?

Waiter. Five to nine, pleaſe your Honour.

Mite. I am at all that is ſet. How muſt I proceed?

Waiter. With a tap, as the chances are equal; then raiſe the box genteelly and gently, with the finger and thumb.

Mite. Thus?

Waiter. Exactly, your Honour. Cinque and quater; you're out.

Mite. What is next to be done?

Waiter. Flirt the bones with an air of indifference, and pay the money that's ſet.

Mite. Will that do?

Waiter. With a little more experience, your Honour.

Mite. Then paſs the box to my neighbour?

Waiter. Yes; or you make a back hand, if you pleaſe.

Mite. Cou'dn't you give me ſome general rules? for then, you know, I might practiſe in private.

Waiter. By all means. Seven, Sir, is better nicked by a ſtamp.

Mite. So?

Waiter. Yes. When you want to throw ſix and four, or two cinques, you muſt take the long gallery, and whirl the dice to the end of the table.

Mite. Thus?

Waiter. Pretty well, pleaſe your Honour. When your chance is low, as tray, ace, or two deuces, the beſt method is to dribble out the bones from the box.

Mite. Will that do?

Waiter. Your Honour comes rapidly on.

Mite. So that, perhaps, in a couple of months, I ſhall be able to tap, flirt, ſtamp, dribble, and whirl, with any man in the club?

Waiter.

Waiter. As your Honour has a genius, you will make a wonderful progreſs, no doubt: but theſe nice matters are not got in a moment; there muſt be parts, as well as practice, your Honour.

Mite. What! parts for the performance of this?

Waiter. This? Why, there's Sir Chriſtopher Clumſy, in the whole loſing his fortune (and I believe he was near a twelvemonth about it), never once threw, paid, or received, with one atom of grace.

Mite. He muſt have been a dull devil, indeed.

Waiter. A mere dunce! got no credit by loſing his money; was ruined without the leaſt reputation.

Mite. Perhaps ſo. Well, but, Dick, as to the oaths and phraſes that are moſt in uſe at the club?

Waiter. I have brought them here in this paper: as ſoon as your Honour has got them by heart, I will teach you when and in what manner to uſe them.

Mite. [*after looking at the paper.*] How long do you apprehend before I may be fit to appear at the table?

Waiter. In a month or ſix weeks. I would adviſe your Honour to begin in the Newmarket week, when the few people left do little better than piddle.

Mite. Right: ſo I ſhall gain confidence againſt the club's coming to town.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mrs Crocus, from Brompton, your Honour.

Mite. Has ſhe brought me a bouquet?

Serv. Your Honour?

Mite. Any noſegays, you blockhead?

Serv. She has a boy with a baſket.

Mite. Shew her in! [*Exit Servant.*]—Well, Dick, you will go down to my ſteward, and teach him the beſt method of making a rouleau. And, do you hear? let him give you one for your pains.

Waiter. Your Honour's obedient! You'd have me attend every morning?

Mite. Without doubt: it would be madneſs to loſe a minute, you know. [*Exit Waiter.*

Enter Mrs Crocus.

Well, Mrs Crocus; let us ſee what you have brought me.

Your

Your laſt bouquet was as big as a broom, with a tulip ſtrutting up like a magiſtrate's mace; and, beſides, made me look like a devil.

Crocus. I hope your Honour could find no fault with the flowers? It is true, the polyanthuſes were a little pinched by the eaſterly winds; but for pip, colour, and eye, I defy the whole pariſh of Fulham to match 'em.

Mite. Perhaps not; but it is not the flowers, but the mixture, I blame. Why, here now, Mrs Crocus, one ſhould think you were out of your ſenſes, to cram in this clump of jonquils!

Crocus. I thought your Honour was fond of their ſmell.

Mite. Damn their ſmell! it is their colour I talk of. You know my complexion has been tinged by the Eaſt, and you bring me here a blaze of yellow, that gives me the jaundice. Look! do you ſee here, what a fine figure I cut? You might as well have tied me to a bundle of ſun-flowers!

Crocus. I beg pardon, your Honour!

Mite. Pardon! there is no forgiving faults of this kind. Juſt ſo you ſerved Harry Hectic; you ſtuck into his boſom a parcel of hyacinths, though the poor fellow's face is as pale as a primroſe.

Crocus. I did not know—

Mite. And there, at the opera, the poor creature ſat in his ſide-box, looking like one of the figures in the glaſs-caſes in Weſtminſter Abbey; dead and dreſt!

Crocus. If gentlemen would but give directions, I would make it my ſtudy to ſuit 'em.

Mite. But that your curſed climate won't let you.—Have you any pinks or carnations in bloom?

Crocus. They are not in ſeaſon, your Honour. Lillies of the valley—

Mite. I hate the whole tribe! What, you want to dreſs me up like a corpſe! When ſhall you have any roſe-buds?

Crocus. The latter end of the month, pleaſe your Honour.

Mite. At that time you may call.

Crocus. Your Honour has no further commands?

Mite. None. You may ſend noſegays for my chairmen, as uſual. [*Exit* Mrs Crocus.] Piccard! Here, take that garland away: I believe the woman thought ſhe was dreſſing

dreſſing a may-pole. Make me a bouquet with the artificial flowers I brought from Milan.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Would your Honour pleaſe to ſee Madam Match-'em?

Mite. Introduce her this inſtant.

Enter Mrs Match'em.

My dear Match'em! Well, what news from Cheapſide?

Match. Bad enough; very near a total defeat.

Mite. How ſo? you were furniſhed with ample materials.

Match. But not of the right kind, pleaſe your Honour. I have had but little intercourſe with that part of the world: my buſineſs has chiefly lain on this ſide of the Bar; and I was weak enough to think both cities alike.

Mite. And arn't they?

Match. No two nations can differ ſo widely! Though money is ſuppoſed the idol of merchants, their wives don't agree in the worſhip.

Mite. In that article I thought the whole world was united.

Match. No; they don't know what to do with their money; a Pantheon ſubſcription, or a maſquerade ticket, is more negotiable there than a note from the bank.

Mite. What think you of a bracelet, or a well-fancied aigret?

Match. I ſhould think they muſt make their way.

Mite. I have ſent ſome rough diamonds to be poliſhed in Holland; when they are returned, I will equip you, Match'em, with ſome of theſe toys.

Match. Toys? how light he makes of theſe things!—Bleſs your noble and generous ſoul! I believe for a trifle more I could have obtained Lady Lurcher laſt night.

Mite. Indeed?

Match. She has been preſſed a good deal to diſcharge an old ſcore, long due to a knight from the north; and play-debts, your Honour knows, there is no paying in part: ſhe ſeemed deeply diſtreſſed; and I really believe another hundred would have made up the ſum.

Mite. And how came you not to advance it?

Match.

Match. I did not chuſe to exceed my commiſſion; your Honour knows the bill was only for five.

Mite. Oh, you ſhould have immediately made it up; you know I never ſtint myſelf in theſe matters.

Match. Why, had I been in caſh, I believe I ſhould have ventured, your Honour. If your Honour approves, I have thought of a project that will ſave us both a good deal of trouble.

Mite. Communicate, good Mrs Match'em!

Match. That I may not peſter you with applications for every trifle I want, ſuppoſe you were to depoſit a round ſum in my hands.

Mite. What, Match'em, make you my banker for beauty? Ha, ha, ha!

Match. Exactly, your Honour. Ha, ha, ha!

Mite. Faith, Match'em, a very good conceit.

Match. You may depend on my punctuality in paying your draughts.

Mite. I don't harbour the leaſt doubt of your honour.

Match. Would you have me proceed in Patty Parrington's buſineſs? She is expected from Bath in a week.

Mite. And what becomes of her aunt?

Match. That Argus is to be left in the country.

Mite. You had better ſuſpend your operations for a while. Do you know, Mrs Match'em, that I am a-going to be married?

Match. Married? your Honour's pleaſed to be pleaſant: that day I hope never to ſee.

Mite. The treaty wants nothing but her friends ratification; and I think there is no danger of their with-holding that.

Match. Nay, then, the matter is as good as concluded: I was always in dread of this fatal ſtroke!

Mite. But, Match'em, why ſhould you be ſo averſe to the meaſure?

Match. Can it be thought, that with dry eyes I could bear the loſs of ſuch a friend as your Honour? I don't know how it is, but I am ſure I never took ſuch a fancy to any man in my life.

Mite. Nay, Match'em!

Match. Something ſo magnificent and princely in all you ſay or do, that a body has, as I may ſay, a pleaſure in taking pains in your ſervice.

Mite. Well, but prithee, child—

Match. And then, when one has brought matters to bear, no after-reproaches, no grumblings from parties, ſuch general ſatisfaction on all ſides! I am ſure, ſince the death of my huſband, as honeſt a man, except the thing he died for—

Mite. How came that about, Mrs Match'em?

Match. Why, Kit was rather apt to be careleſs, and put a neighbour's name to a note without ſtopping to aſk his conſent.

Mite. Was that all?

Match. Nothing elſe. Since that day, I ſaw no mortal has caught my eye but your Honour.

Mite. Really, Match'em?

Match. I can't ſay, neither, it was the charms of your perſon—though they are ſuch as any lady might like—but it was the beauties of your mind that made an impreſſion upon me.

Mite. Nay, prithee, Match'em, dry up your tears! you diſtreſs me! Be perſuaded you have nothing to fear.

Match. How!

Mite. Why, you don't ſuppoſe that I am prompted to this project by paſſion?

Match. No?

Mite. Pho! no; only wanted a wife to complete my eſtabliſhment; juſt to adorn the head of my table.

Match. To ſtick up in your room, like any other fine piece of furniture?

Mite. Nothing elſe; as an antique buſt or a picture.

Match. That alters the caſe.

Mite. Perhaps, I ſhall be confined a little at firſt; for when you take or bury a wife, decency requires that you ſhould keep your houſe for a week: after that time, you will find me, dear Match'em, all that you can wiſh.

Match. Ah! that is more than your Honour can tell. I have known ſome of my gentlemen, before marriage, make as firm and good reſolutions not to have the leaſt love or regard for their wives; but they have been ſeduced after all, and turned out the pooreſt tame family fools!

Mite. Indeed?

Match. Good for nothing at all.

Mite. That ſhall not be my caſe.

Enter

Enter Servant.

Serv. Your Honour's levee is crowded.

Mite. I come. Piccard, give me my coat!—I have had ſome thoughts of founding in this town a ſeraglio; they are of ſingular uſe in the Indies: do you think I could bring it to bear?

Match. Why, a cuſtomer of mine did formerly make an attempt; but he purſued too violent meaſures at firſt; wanted to confine the ladies againſt their conſent; and that too in a country of freedom.

Mite. Oh, fy! How the beſt inſtitutions may fail for want of a man proper to manage!

Match. But your Honour has had great experience.—If you would beſtow the direction on me—

Mite. Impoſſible, Match'em! in the Eaſt we never confide that office to your ſex or complexion. I had ſome thoughts of importing three blacks from Bengal, who have been properly prepared for the ſervice; but I ſha'n't venture till the point is determined whether thoſe creatures are to be conſidered as mere chattels, or men. [*Exeunt.*

A Saloon.

Enter Mayor, Touchit, Nathan, Moſes, *&c.*

Serv. Walk in, gentlemen! his Honour will be preſently here.

Touchit. Do you ſee, Mr Mayor? look about you! here are noble apartments!

Mayor. Very fine, very curious, indeed! But, after all, Mr Touchit, I am not ſo over-fond of theſe Nabobs; for my part, I had rather ſell myſelf to ſome body elſe.

Touchit. And why ſo, Mr Mayor?

Mayor. I don't know—they do a mortal deal of harm in the country: why, wherever any of them ſettles, it raiſes the price of proviſions for thirty miles round. People rail at ſeaſons and crops; in my opinion, it is all along with them there folks that things are ſo ſcarce.

Touchit. Why, you talk like a fool! Suppoſe they have mounted the beef and mutton a trifle; a'n't we obliged to them too for raiſing the value of boroughs? You ſhould always ſet one againſt t'other.

Mayor. That, indeed, is nothing but fair. But how comes

comes it about? and where do theſe here people get all their wealth?

Touchit. The way is plain enough; from our ſettlements and poſſeſſions abroad.

Mayor. Oh, may be ſo. I've been often minded to aſk you what ſort of things them there ſettlements are; becauſe why, as you know, I have been never beyond ſea.

Touchit. Oh, Mr Mayor, I will explain that in a moment: Why, here are a body of merchants that beg to be admitted as friends, and take poſſeſſion of a ſmall ſpot in a country, and carry on a beneficial commerce with the inoffenſive and innocent people, to which they kindly give their conſent.

Mayor. Don't you think now that is very civil of them.

Touchit. Doubtleſs. Upon which, Mr Mayor, we cunningly encroach, and fortify by little and by little, till at length, we growing too ſtrong for the natives, we turn them out of their lands, and take poſſeſſion of their money and jewels.

Mayor. And don't you think, Mr Touchit, that is a little uncivil in us?

Touchit. Oh, nothing at all: theſe people are but a little better than Tartars or Turks.

Mayor. No, no, Mr Touchit; juſt the reverſe; it is *they* have caught the Tartars in us.

Touchit. Ha, ha, ha! well ſaid Mr Mayor. But, huſh! here comes his Honour. Fall back!

Enter Sir Matthew Mite.

Mite. Oh, Nathan! are you there? You have ſplit the ſtock, as I bid you?

Nath. I vas punctually obey your directions.

Mite. And I ſhall be in no danger of loſing my liſt?

Nath. Dat is ſafe, your Honour; we have nothing to fear.

Mite. Moſes Mendoza! you will take care to qualify Peter Pratewell and Counſellor Quibble? I ſhall want ſome ſpeakers at the next General Court.

Moſes. Pleaſe your Honour, I ſhall be careful of dat.

Mite. How is the ſtock?

Moſes. It vas got up the end of the veek.

Mite. Then ſell out till you ſink it two and a half. Has my advice been followed for burning the tea?

Moſes.

Moſes. As to dat matter, I vas not enquire dat; I believe not.

Mite. So that commodity will ſoon be a drug. The Engliſh are too proud to profit by the practice of others: what would become of the ſpice trade, if the Dutch brought their whole growth to market?

Moſes. Dat is very true. Your Honour has no farder commands?

Mite. None at preſent, Mr Mendoza. [*Exit* Mendoza.

Nath. For de next ſettlement, would your Honour be de bull or de bear?

Mite. I ſhall ſend you my orders to Jonathan's. Oh, Nathan! did you tell that man in Berkſhire I would buy his eſtate?

Nath. Yes; but he ſay he has no mind, no occaſion to ſell it; dat de eſtate belong to great many faders before him.

Mite. Why, the man muſt be mad; did you tell him I had taken a fancy to the ſpot when I was but a boy?

Nath. I vas tell him as much.

Mite. And that all the time I was in India, my mind was bent upon the purchaſe?

Nath. I vas ſay ſo.

Mite. And now I'm come home, am determined to buy it?

Nath. I make uſe of de very vords.

Mite. Well then! what would the booby be at?

Nath. I don't know.

Mite. Give the fellow four times the value, and bid him turn out in a month.—[*To* Touchit.] May I preſume, Sir, to aſk who you are, and what your buſineſs may be?

Touchit. My name, Sir, is Touchit, and theſe gentlemen ſome friends and neighbours of mine. Who are ordered by the Chriſtian Club, of the borough of Bribe'em, to wait upon your Honour, with a tender of the nomination of our two members at the enſuing election.

Mite. Sir, I accept their offer with pleaſure; and am happy to find, notwithſtanding all that has been ſaid, that the union ſtill ſubſiſts between Bengal and the ancient corporation of Bribe'em.

Touchit. And if they ever are ſevered, I can aſſure your Honour the Chriſtian Club will not be to blame. Your Honour underſtands me, I hope?

Mite. Perfectly. Nor ſhall it, I promiſe you, be my fault,

fault, good Mr Touchit. But (you will forgive my curioſity, Sir!) the name your club has adopted, has at firſt a whimſical ſound; but you had your reaſons, no doubt.

Touchit. The very beſt in the world, pleaſe your Honour: from our ſtrict union and brotherly kindneſs, we hang together; like the primitive Chriſtians, too, we have all things in common.

Mite. In common? I don't apprehend you.

Touchit. Why, pleaſe your Honour, when the bargain is ſtruck, and the depoſit is made, as a proof that we love our neighbours as well as ourſelves, we ſubmit to an equal partition; no man has a larger ſhare than another.

Mite. A moſt Chriſtian-like diſpenſation!

Touchit. Yes; in our borough all is unanimity now: formerly we had nothing but diſcontents and heart-burnings amongſt us; each man jealous and afraid that his neighbour got more and did better than him.

Mite. Indeed?

Touchit. Ay, and with reaſon ſometimes. Why, I remember, at the election ſome time ago, when I took up my freedom, I could get but thirty guineas for a new pair of jack-boots; whilſt Tom Ramſkin over the way had a fifty-pound note for a pair of waſh-leather breeches.

Mite. Very partial indeed!

Touchit. So, upon the whole, we thought it beſt to unite.

Mite. Oh, much the beſt. Well, Sir, you may aſſure your principals that I ſhall take care properly to acknowledge the ſervice they do me.

Touchit. No doubt, no doubt. But—will your Honour ſtep a little this way?—Though no queſtion can be made of your Honour's keeping your word, yet it has always been the rule with our club to receive the proper acknowledgement before the ſervice is done.

Mite. Ay, but, Mr Touchit, ſuppoſe the ſervice ſhould never be done?

Touchit. What then muſt become of our conſciences? We are Chriſtians, your Honour.

Mite. True; but, Mr Touchit, you remember the proverb?

Touchit. What proverb, your Honour?

Mite. There are two bad paymaſters; thoſe who pay before, and thoſe who never pay.

Touchit.

Touchit. True, your Honour; but our club has always found, that thoſe who don't pay before are ſure never to pay.

Mite. How! impoſſible! the man who breaks his word with ſuch faithful and honeſt adherents, deſerves richly a halter. Gentlemen, in my opinion, he deſerves to be hanged.

Touchit. Huſh! have a care what you ſay.

Mite. What is the matter?

Touchit. You ſee the fat man that is behind; he will be the returning officer at the election.

Mite. What then?

Touchit. On a gibbet at the end of our town there hangs a ſmuggler, for robbing the cuſtom-houſe.

Mite. Well?

Touchit. The Mayor's own brother, your Honour: now, perhaps, he may be jealous that you meant to throw ſome reflection on him or his family.

Mite. Not unlikely.—I ſay, gentlemen, whoever violates his promiſe to ſuch faithful friends as you are, in my poor opinion deſerves to be damned!

Touchit. That's right! ſtick to that! for tho' the Chriſtian Club may have ſome fears of the gallows, they don't value damnation of a farthing.

Mite. Why ſhould they, as it may be ſo long before any thing of that kind may happen, you know?

Touchit. Good! good again! Your Honour takes us rightly, I ſee: I make no doubt, it won't be long before we come to a good underſtanding.

Mite. The ſooner the better, good Mr Touchit; and, therefore, in one word, pray what are your terms?

Touchit. Do you mean for one, or would your Honour bargain for both?

Mite. Both, both.

Touchit. Why, we could not have afforded you one under three thouſand at leaſt; but as your Honour, as I may ſay, has a mind to deal in the groſs, we ſhall charge you but five for both.

Mite. Oh, fy! above the market, good Mr Touchit!

Touchit. Dog-cheap; neck-beef; a penny loaf for a halfpenny! Why, we had partly agreed to bring in Sir Chriſtopher Quinze and Major Match'em for the very ſame money; but the Major has been a little unlucky at Almack's, and at preſent can't depoſit the needful; but he ſays,

ſays, however, if he ſhould be ſucceſsful at the next Newmarket meeting, he will faithfully abide by the bargain: but the turf, your Honour knows, is but an uncertain eſtate, and ſo we can't depend upon him.

Mite. True. Well, Sir, as I may ſoon have occaſion for all the friends I can make, I ſhall haggle no longer; I accept your propoſals: in the next room we will ſettle the terms.

Touchit. Your Honour will always find the Chriſtians ſteady and firm.—But, won't your Honour introduce us to his Worſhip whilſt we are here?

Mite. To his Worſhip? to whom?

Touchit. To the gentleman in black.

Mite. Worſhip? you are mad, Mr Touchit! That is a ſlave I brought from the Indies.

Touchit. Good lack! may be ſo! I did not know but the gentleman might belong to the tribe, who, we are told by the papers, conferred thoſe ſplendid titles upon your Honour in India.

Mite. Well, Mr Touchit, what then?

Touchit. I thought it not unlikely, but, in return to that compliment, your Honour might chuſe to make one of the family member for the corporation of Bribe'em.

Mite. Why, you would not ſubmit to accept of a negro?

Touchit. Our preſent members, for aught we know, may be of the ſame complexion, your Honour; for we have never ſet eyes on them yet.

Mite. That's ſtrange! But, after all, you could not think of electing a black?

Touchit. That makes no difference to us: the Chriſtian Club has ever been perſuaded, that a good candidate, like a good horſe, can't be of a bad colour. [*Exit with friends.*

Enter Thomas Oldham *and others.*

Mite. [*to* Oldham.] What is your buſineſs, and name.

Tho. Oldham.

Mite. The brother of Sir John? I have heard of you: you are, if I miſtake not, a merchant?

Tho. I have that honour, Sir Matthew.

Mite. Um! honour!—Well, Sir; and what are your commands?

Tho. I wait on you in the name of my brother, with—

Mite. An anſwer to the meſſage I ſent him. When do we

we meet to finiſh the matter? It muſt be to-morrow, or Sunday, for I ſhall be buſy next week.

Tho. To-morrow?

Mite. Ay; it is not for a man like me to dangle and court, Mr Oldham.

Tho. Why, to be plain, Sir Matthew, it would, I am afraid, be but loſing your time.

Mite. Sir?

Tho. As there is not one in the family that ſeems the leaſt inclined to favour your wiſh.

Mite. No? ha, ha, ha! that's pleaſant enough! ha, ha, ha! And why not?

Tho. They are, Sir Matthew, no ſtrangers to your great power and wealth; but corrupt as you may conceive this country to be, there are ſuperior ſpirits living, who would diſdain an alliance with grandeur obtained at the expence of honour and virtue.

Mite. And what relation has this ſentimental declaration to me?

Tho. My intention, Sir Matthew, was not to offend; I was deſired to wait on you with a civil denial.

Mite. And you have faithfully diſcharged your commiſſion.

Tho. Why, I'm a man of plain manners, Sir Matthew; a ſupercilious air, or a ſneer, won't prevent me from ſpeaking my thoughts.

Mite. Perfectly right, and prodigiouſly prudent!—Well, Sir; I hope it won't be thought too preſuming, if I deſire to hear my ſentence proceed from the mouth of the father and daughter.

Tho. By all means; I will wait on you thither.

Mite. That is not ſo convenient, at preſent. I have brought from Italy, antiques, ſome curious remains, which are to be depoſited in the archives of this country; the Antiquarian Society have, in conſequence, choſen me one of their body, and this is the hour of reception.

Tho. We ſhall ſee you in the courſe of the day?

Mite. At the cloſe of the ceremony. Perhaps, I ſhall have ſomething to urge, that may procure me ſome favour from your very reſpectable family.—Piccard, attend Mr A—a—a to the door.

Tho. I gueſs your deſign. [*Exit.*

Mite. Who waits there?

Enter Servant.

Step to my attorney directly; bid him attend me within an hour at Oldham's, armed with all the powers I gave him. [*Exit Servant.*] I will ſee if I can't bend to my will this ſturdy race of inſolent beggars!—After all, riches to a man who knows how to employ them, are as uſeful in England as in any part of the Eaſt: there they gain us thoſe ends in ſpite and defiance of law, which, with a proper agent, may here be obtained under the pretence and colour of law. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

The Antiquarian Society.

Secretary. SIR Matthew Mite, preceded by his preſents, will attend this honourable Society this morning.

1 *Antiquarian.* Is he appriſed that an inauguration-ſpeech is required, in which he is to expreſs his love of vertu, and produce proofs of his antique erudition?

Sec. He has been appriſed, and is rightly prepared.

2 *Ant.* Are the minutes of our laſt meeting fairly recorded and entered?

Sec. They are.

1 *Ant.* And the valuable antiques which have happily eſcaped the depredations of time ranged and regiſtered rightly?

Sec. All in order.

2 *Ant.* As there are new acquiſitions to the Society's ſtock, I think it is right that the members ſhould be inſtructed in their ſeveral natures and names.

1 *Ant.* By all means. Read the liſt!

Sec. "*Imprimis*, In a large glaſs-caſe, and in fine pre-"ſervation, the toe of the ſlipper of Cardinal Pandulpho, "with which he kick'd the breech of King John at Swin-"ſtead Abbey, when he gave him abſolution and penance."

2 *Ant.* A moſt noble remains!

1 *Ant.* An excellent antidote againſt the progreſs of Popery, as it proves the Pontiff's inſolent abuſe of his power—Proceed.

Sec. "A pair of nut-crackers preſented by Harry the "Eighth

" Eighth to Anna Bullen the eve of their nuptials; the " wood ſuppoſed to be walnut."

1 *Ant.* Which proves that, before the Reformation, walnut trees were planted in England.

Sec. " The cape of Queen Elizabeth's riding-hood, which " ſhe wore on a ſolemn feſtival, when carried behind Bur- " leigh to Paul's; the cloth undoubtedly Kidderminſter."

2 *Ant.* A moſt inſtructive leſſon to us, as it proves that patriotic princeſs wore nothing but the manufactures of England!

Sec. " A cork-ſcrew, preſented by Sir John Falſtaff to " Harry the Fifth, with a tobacco-ſtopper of Sir Walter " Raleigh's, made of the ſtern of the ſhip in which he firſt " compaſſed the globe; given to the Society by a clergy- " man from the North Riding of Yorkſhire."

1 *Ant.* A rare inſtance of generoſity, as they muſt have both been of ſingular uſe to the reverend donor himſelf!

Sec. " A curious collection, in regular and undoubted " ſucceſſion, of all the tickets of Iſlington turnpike, from " its firſt inſtitution to the twentieth of May."

2 *Ant.* Preſerve them with care, as they may hereafter ſerve to illuſtrate that part of the Engliſh hiſtory.

Sec. " A wooden medal of Shakeſpeare, made from the " mulberry tree he planted himſelf; with a Queen Anne's " farthing; from the manager of Drury Lane Playhouſe."

1 *Ant.* Has he received the Society's thanks?

Sec. They are ſent.

Enter Beadle.

Beadle. Sir Matthew Mite attends at the door.

1 *Ant.* Let him be admitted directly.

Enter Sir Matthew Mite, *preceded by four blacks; firſt black bearing a large book; ſecond, a green chamber-pot; third, ſome lava from the mountain Veſuvius; fourth, a box.* Sir Matthew *takes his ſeat; Secretary receives the firſt preſent, and reads the label.*

Sec. " Purchaſed of the Abbe Montini at Naples for " five hundred pounds, an illegible manuſcript in Latin, " containing the twelve books of Livy, ſuppoſed to be loſt."

Mite. This invaluable treaſure was very near falling into the hands of the Pope, who deſigned to depoſit it in the Vatican Library, and I reſcued it from idolatrous hands.

1 *Ant.*

1 *Ant.* A pious, learned, and laudable purchaſe!

Sec. [*receives the ſecond preſent, and reads the label.*]—"A ſarcophagus, or Roman urn, dug from the temple of "Concord."

Mite. Suppoſed to have held the duſt of Marc Antony's coachman.

Sec. [*receives the third preſent, and reads.*] "A large "piece of the lava, thrown from the Veſuvian volcano at "the laſt great eruption."

Mite. By a chymical analyſis, it will be eaſy to diſcover the conſtituent parts of this maſs; which, by properly preparing it, will make it no difficult taſk to propagate burning mountains in England, if encouraged by premiums.

2 *Ant.* Which it will, no doubt!

Mite. Gentlemen! Not contented with collecting, for the uſe of my country, theſe ineſtimable relics, with a large catalogue of petrifactions, bones, beetles, and butterflies, contained in that box, [*pointing to the preſent born by the fourth black,*] I have likewiſe laboured for the advancement of national knowledge: for which end, permit me to clear up ſome doubts relative to a material and intereſting point in the Engliſh hiſtory. Let others toil to illumine the dark annals of Greece or of Rome; my ſearches are ſacred only to the ſervice of Britain!

The point I mean to clear up, is an error crept into the life of that illuſtrious magiſtrate the great Whittington, and his no leſs eminent cat: and in this diſqiſition four material points are in queſtion.

1ſt. Did Whittington ever exiſt?

2d. Was Whittington Lord Mayor of London?

3d. Was he really poſſeſſed of a cat?

4th. Was that cat the ſource of his wealth?

That Whittington lived, no doubt can be made; that he was Lord Mayor of London, is equally true; but as to his cat, that, gentlemen, is the Gordian knot to untie. And here, gentlemen, be it permitted me to define what a cat is. A cat is a domeſtic, whiſkered, four-footed animal, whoſe employment is catching of mice; but let puſs have been ever ſo ſubtle, let puſs have been ever ſo ſucceſsful, to what could puſs's captures amount? no tanner can curry the ſkin of a mouſe; no family make a meal of the meat; conſequently no cat could give Whittington his wealth.

From

From whence then does this error proceed? be that my care to point out!

The commerce this worthy merchant carried on was chiefly confined to our coasts; for this purpose, he constructed a vessel, which, from its agility and lightness, he aptly christened a Cat. Nay, to this our day, gentlemen, all our coals from Newcastle are imported in nothing but cats. From thence it appears, that it was not the whiskered, four-footed, mouse-killing cat, that was the source of the magistrate's wealth, but the coasting, sailing, coal-carrying cat; that, gentlemen, was Whittington's cat.

1 *Ant.* What a fund of learning!

2 *Ant.* Amazing acuteness of erudition!

1 *Ant.* Let this discovery be made public directly.

2 *Ant.* And the author mentioned with honour.

1 *Ant.* I make no doubt but the city of London will desire him to sit for his picture, or send him his freedom in a fifty-pound box.

2 *Ant.* The honour done their first magistrate richly deserves it.

1 *Ant.* Break we up this assembly, with a loud declaration, that Sir Matthew Mite is equally skilled in arts as in arms.

2 *Ant.* *Tam Mercurio quam Marti.*

[*Exeunt Antiquarians.*

Mite. Having thus discharged my debt to the public, I must attend to my private affairs. Will Rapine, my attorney, attend as I bid him?

Serv. He will be punctual, your Honour.

Mite. Then drive to Hanover-Square.

Putty. [*without.*] I will come in!

Enter Servant.

Serv. There's a little shabby fellow without, that insists on seeing your Honour.

Mite. Why, who and what can he be?

Serv. He calls himself Putty, and says he went to school with your Honour.

Serv. [*within.*] His Honour don't know you!

Putty. I will come in! Not know me, you oaf? what should ail him? Why, I tell you we were bred up together from boys. Stand by, or I'll—

Enter

Enter Putty.

Hey! yes, it is—no, it a'n't—yes, it is Matthew Mite. —Lord love your queer face! what a figure you cut! how you are altered! well, had I met with you by chance, I don't think I ſhould ever have known you. I have had a deuced deal of work to get at you.

Mite. This is a lucky encounter!

Putty. There is a little fat fellow, that opens the door at your houſe, was as pert as a prentice juſt out of his time: he would not give me the leaſt inkling about you; and I ſhould have returned to Shoreditch as wiſe as I came, if ſome folks who were gazing at the fine gilt coach in the ſtreet, hadn't told me 'twas yours. Well, Mr Mite, things are mainly changed ſince we were boys at the Blue-Coat: who could have thought that you would have got ſo up in the world? for you know you were reckoned a dull one at ſchool.

Serv. Friend, do you know who you talk to?

Putty. Yes, friend, much better than you do. I am told he is become a Knight, and a Nabob; and what of all that? For your Nabobs, they are but a kind of outlandiſh creatures, that won't paſs current with us; and as to knights, we have a few of them in the city, whom I dare ſpeak to without doffing my hat. So, Mr Scrape-trencher, let's have no more of your jaw!—I ſay, Mat, doesn't remember one Eaſter-Tueſday, how you tipt the barrow-woman into Fleet-Ditch, as we were going about with the hymns?

Mite. An anecdote that does me infinite honour!

Putty. How all the folks laughed to ſee how bolt upright ſhe ſtood on her head in the mud! ha! ha! ha! And one fifth of November, I ſhall never forget! how you frightened a preaching Methodiſt tailor, by throwing a cracker into the pulpit.

Mite. Another pretty exploit!

Putty. At every bounce, how poor Stitch capered and jumped! Ah! many's the merry freak we have had! for this I muſt ſay, thought Mat was but bad at his book, for miſchiefful matters there wasn't a more ingenious cuterer lad in the ſchool.

Mite. Yes; I have got a fine reputation, I ſee!

Putty.

Putty. Well, but Mat! what, be'ſt dumb? why doesn't ſpeak to a ſchool-fellow?

Mite. That at preſent is more than I'll own.—I fancy, Mr A—a—a, you have made ſome miſtake.

Putty. Some miſtake?

Mite. I don't recollect that I ever had the honour to know you.

Putty. What, don't you remember Phil Putty!

Mite. No.

Putty. That was prentice to Mr Gibſon the glazier in Shoreditch.

Mite. No.

Putty. That at the Blue-Coat Hoſpital has often ſaved your bacon by owning your pranks?

Mite. No.

Putty. No! What, then, mayhap you ben't Mat Mite, the ſon of old John and Margery Mite, at the Sow and Sauſage in St Mary Axe, that took the tarts from the man in Pye-corner, and was ſent beyond ſea for fear worſe ſhould come on it?

Mite. You ſee, Mr Putty, the glazier, if that is your name and profeſſion, you are entirely out in this matter; ſo you need not repeat your viſits to me. [*Exit.*

Putty. Now here's a pretty purſe-proud ſon of a—who, forſooth, becauſe he is grown great by robbing the heathens, won't own an old friend and acquaintance, and one too of the livery beſide! Dammee, the great Turk himſelf need not be aſhamed to ſhake hands with a citizen! "Mr "Putty the glazier!" well, what a pox am I the better for you? I'll be ſworn our company has made more money by a ſingle election at Brentford, than by all his exploits put together. [*Exit.*

Sir John Oldham's *houſe.*

Enter Mr Thomas Oldham, *followed by a Servant.*

Tho. Sir Matthew Mite is not come?

Serv. No, Sir.

Tho. Is Tom here?

Serv. Mr Oldham is, I believe, with Miſs in the parlour.

Tho. Let him know I would ſee him. [*Exit Servant.*] Poor boy! Nay, I ſincerely grieve for them both! this diſappointment

diſappointment, like an untimely froſt, will hang heavy on their tender years: to conquer the firſt and fineſt feelings of nature is an arduous taſk!

Enter Young Oldham.

So, Tom! ſtill attached to this ſpot, I perceive?

Y. Old. Sir, I arrived but the inſtant before you.

Tho. Nay, child, I don't blame you. You are no ſtranger to the almoſt invincible bars that oppoſe your views on my niece; it would be therefore prudent, inſtead of indulging, to wean yourſelf by degrees.

Y. Old. Are there no hopes, then, Sir, of ſubduing my aunt?

Tho. I ſee none: nay, perhaps, as matters now ſtand, a compliance may be out of her power.

Y. Old. How is that poſſible, Sir? out of her power?

Tho. I won't anticipate: misfortunes come too ſoon of themſelves; a ſhort time will explain what I mean.

Y. Old. You alarm me! Would you condeſcend to inſtruct me, I hope, Sir, I ſhall have diſcretion enough—

Tho. It would anſwer no end. I would have you both prepare for the worſt: ſee your couſin again; and remember, this, perhaps, may be the laſt time of your meeting.

Y. Old. The laſt of our—

Tho. But Sophy is here. I muſt go in to Sir John.—

[Oldham *bows low to* Sophy *and retires.*

Enter Sophy.

Sophy. Sir!—What can be the meaning of this? My uncle Oldham avoids me! you ſeem ſhocked! no additional misfortune, I hope?

Y. Old. My father has threatened me, in obſcure terms, I confeſs, with the worſt that can happen.

Sophy. How!

Y. Old. The total, nay, perhaps, immediate loſs of my Sophy.

Sophy. From what cauſe?

Y. Old. That in tenderneſs he choſe to conceal.

Sophy. But why make it a myſtery? have you no gueſs?

Y. Old. Not the moſt diſtant conception. My lady's diſlike would hardly prompt her to ſuch violent meaſures. I can't comprehend how this can poſſibly be; but yet my father

father has too firm, too manly a mind, to encourage or harbour vain fears.

Sophy. Here they come. I ſuppoſe the riddle will ſoon be explained.

Enter Sir John, Lady, *and* Thomas Oldham.

Lady Old. But what motive could he have for demanding this whimſical interview? he could not doubt your credentials, or think his preſence could be grateful to us.

Tho. I have delivered my meſſage.

Lady Old. Perhaps he depends on his rhetorical powers: I hear he has a good opinion of them. Stay, Sophy! Sir Matthew Mite, diſtruſting the meſſage we begged your uncle to carry, deſires to have it confirmed by ourſelves: I fancy, child, you will do yourſelf no violence in rejecting this lover. He is an amiable ſwain, I confeſs!

Sophy. I ſhall be always happy in obeying your Ladyſhip's orders.

Lady Old. Are you ſure of that, Sophy? a time may ſoon come for the trial.

Sir John. Well, in the main, I am glad of this meeting; it will not only put a final end to this buſineſs, but give us an opportunity of diſcuſſing other matters, my dear.

Lady Old. Is that your opinion, Sir John? I fancy he will not be very fond of prolonging his viſit.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Matthew Mite!

Lady Old. Shew him in!—Now, Sir John, be on your guard; ſupport this ſcene with a dignity that becomes one of your birth and—

Sir John. Never fear my dignity, love. I warrant you I'll give him as good as he brings.

Enter Sir Matthew Mite.

Mite. I find the whole tribe is convened.—I hope I am not an intruder; but I confeſs the extraordinary anſwer I received from the mouth of this worthy citizen, to a meſſage conveyed by my ſecretary, induced me to queſtion its authenticity, unleſs confirmed by yourſelves.

Lady Old. And why ſhould you think our reply ſo very extraordinary?

Mite. You muſt give me leave to ſmile at that queſtion.

Lady Old. A very decifive anſwer, I own!

Mite. You are, Lady Oldham, a woman of the world, and ſuppoſed not to be wanting in ſenſe.

Lady Old. Which this conduct of mine inclines you to doubt?

Mite. Why, to be plain, my condition and your own ſituation conſidered, prudence might have dictated a different reply.

Lady Old. And yet, Sir Matthew, upon the matureſt deliberation, all the parties, you ſee, perſiſt in giving no other.

Mite. Is it ſo? You will permit me, Lady Oldham, to deſire one of thoſe reaſons which influenced this auguſt aſſembly upon the occaſion?

Lady Old. They will, I dare ſay, appear but trifling to you.

Mite. Let us have them, however.

Lady Old. Firſt, we think it right to have a little regard to *her* happineſs, as ſhe is indebted for her exiſtence to us.

Mite. Which you think ſhe riſques in an union with me? [Lady Oldham *bows.*] And why ſo? I have the means to procure her, Madam, thoſe enjoyments with which your ſex is chiefly delighted.

Lady Old. You will, Sir Matthew, pardon my weakneſs; but I would much rather ſee my child with a competence, nay, even reduced to an indigent ſtate, than voluptuouſly roting in pleaſures that derive their ſource from the ruin of others.

Mite. Ruin! what, you, I find, adopt the popular prejudice, and conclude that every man that is rich is a villain?

Lady Old. I only echo the voice of the public. Beſides, I would wiſh my daughter a more ſolid eſtabliſhment: The poſſeſſions ariſing from plunder very rarely are permanent; we every day ſee what has been treacherouſly and rapaciouſly gained, as profuſely and full as rapidly ſquandered.

Mite. I am ſorry, Madam, to ſee one of your faſhion concur in the common cry of the times; but ſuch is the gratitude of this country to thoſe who have given it dominion and wealth.

Tho. I could wiſh even that fact was well founded, Sir Matthew. Your riches (which perhaps too are only ideal), by introducing a general ſpirit of diſſipation, have extinguiſhed

guiſhed labour and induſtry, the ſlow but ſure ſource of national wealth.

Mite. To theſe refinements I have no time to reply—By one of your Ladyſhip's hints I ſhall profit at leaſt: I ſhall be a little more careful of the plunder I have made.—Sir John Oldham, you recollect a ſmall ſum borrowed by you?

Sir John. I do.

Mite. The obligations for which are in my poſſeſſion at preſent.

Sir John. I underſtand as much by your letter.

Mite. As I find there is an end of our treaty, it would be right, I think, to diſcharge them directly.

Sir John. I can't ſay that is quite ſo convenient: beſides, I underſtood the party was to wait till the time that Jack comes of age.

Mite. I am told the law does not underſtand what is not clearly expreſſed. Beſides, the *probable* event of your death, or the young gentleman's refuſal to fulfil the agreement, are enough to put a man on his guard.

Tho. Now comes on the ſtorm.

Mite. And, that my prudence may not ſuffer in this Lady's opinion, I have taken ſome precautions which my attorney will more clearly unfold.—Mr Rapine!

Enter Rapine.

You will explain this affair to Sir John: I am a military man, and quite a ſtranger to your legal manœuvres.

Rap. By command of my client, Sir Matthew, I have iſſued here a couple of writs.

Lady Old. Sir John!

Sir John. What?

Rap. By one of which, plaintiff poſſeſſes the perſon, by t'other goods and chattels, of Sir John the defendant.

Mite. A definition very clear and conciſe!

Lady Old. Goods, Sir? what, muſt I be turned out of my houſe?

Rap. No, Madam; you may ſtay here till we ſell, which perhaps may not happen theſe two days. We muſt, indeed, leave a few of our people, juſt to take care that there is nothing embezzled.

Lady Old. A ſhort reſpite, indeed! For a little time, I dare ſay, my brother Oldham will afford us protection.

Oldham,

Come, Sir John, nor let us indulge that monſter's malice with a longer ſight of our miſery.

Rap. You, Madam, are a wife, and may go where you pleaſe; but as to Sir John—

Lady Old. Well!

Rap. He muſt not ſtir: We are anſwerable for the poſſeſſion of him.

Lady Old. Of him? a priſoner? then indeed is our ruin complete!

Sophy. Oh, uncle!—You have been pleaſed, Sir, to expreſs an affection for me: is it poſſible, Sir, you can be ſo cruel, ſo unkind to my parents—

Mite. They are unkind to themſelves.

Sophy. Let me plead for mercy! ſuſpend but a little!—My uncle, you, Sir, are wealthy too!—Indeed we are honeſt! you will not run the leaſt riſque.

Mite. There is a condition, Miſs, in which you have a right to command.

Sophy. Sir!

Mite. It is in your power, and that of your parents, to eſtabliſh one common intereſt amongſt us.

Lady Old. Never! After rejecting, with the contempt they deſerved, the firſt arrogant offers you made, do you ſuppoſe this freſh inſult will gain us?

Mite. I am anſwered.—I preſume, Mr Rapine, there is no longer occaſion for me?

Sophy. Stop, Sir! Mr Oldham teaches me what I ſhould do. Can I ſee their diſtreſs? Heaven knows with what eagerneſs I would ſacrifice my own peace, my own happineſs, to procure them relief! [*Kneels to* Sir Matthew.

Tho. Riſe, niece! nor hope to ſoften that breaſt, already made too callous by crimes! I have long ſeen, Sir, what your malice intended, and prepared myſelf to baffle its purpoſe. I am inſtructed, Sir, in the amount of this man's demands on my brother: you will there find a ſum more than ſufficient to pay it.—And now, my dear ſiſter, I hope you will pleaſe to allow a citizen may be uſeful ſometimes.

Mite. Mr Rapine, is this manœuvre according to law?

Rap. The law, Sir Matthew, always ſleeps when ſatisfaction is made.

Mite. Does it? Our practice is different in the Mayor's Court at Calcutta—I ſhall now make my bow; and leave this

this family, whom I wiſhed to make happy, in ſpite of themſelves, ſoon to regret the fatal loſs ſuſtained by their obſtinate folly.

Tho. Nor can it be long before the wiſdom of their choice will appear; as by partaking of the ſpoil, they might have been involved in that vengeance, which ſoon or late can't fail to fall on the head of the author: and, Sir, notwithſtanding your ſeeming ſecurity, perhaps the hour of retribution is near!

Mite. You muſt, Mr Oldham, give me leave to laugh at your prophetic effuſion. This is not Sparta, nor are theſe the chaſte times of the Roman republic: now-a-days, riches poſſeſs at leaſt one magical power, that, being rightly diſpenſed, they cloſely conceal the ſource from whence they proceeded: that wiſdom, I hope never to want.—I am the obſequious ſervant of this reſpectable family! Adieu! —Come along Rapine! [*Exit with* Rapine.

Lady Old. Brother, what words can I uſe, or how can we thank you as we ought? Sir John! Sophy!

Tho. I am doubly paid, Lady Oldham, in ſupplying the wants of my friends, and defeating the deſigns of a villain. As to the mere money, we citizens indeed are odd kind of folks, and always expect good ſecurity for what we advance.

Lady Old. Sir John's perſon, his fortune, every—

Tho. Nay, nay, nay, upon this occaſion we will not be troubled with land: if you, ſiſter, will place as a pledge my fair couſin in the hands of my ſon—

Lady Old. I freely reſign her diſpoſal to you.

Sir John. And I.

Tho. Then be happy, my children! And as to my young couſins within, I hope we ſhall be able to ſettle them without Sir Matthew's aſſiſtance: for, however praiſeworthy the ſpirit of adventure may be, whoever keeps his poſt, and does his duty at home, will be found to render his country beſt ſervice at laſt! [*Exeunt.*

A

TRIP TO CALAIS;

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

AS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN,

AND INTENDED FOR REPRESENTATION.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

THE CAPUCHIN;

AS IT WAS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL IN THE HAYMARKET.

ALTERED FROM THE

TRIP TO CALAIS.

[That the public may not be deceived, and the reputation of the author injured, by the publication of pieces fabricated in order to take an undue advantage of the general curioſity, the comedy of *A Trip to Calais* is here printed, as originally written, and intended for repreſentation; together with all the alterations and additions which the writer thought neceſſary, when he afterwards produced it on the ſtage, under the title of *The Capuchin*.]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Colonel Croſby,	Gergory Gingham,
O'Donnovan,	Tromfort,
Minnikin,	Kit Cable,
Kit Codling,	La Jeuneſſe,
Dick Drugget,	Servant.
Luke Lapelle,	

Lady Kitty Crocodile,	Jenny Minnikin,
Miſs Lydell,	Hetty,
Mrs Minnikin,	Abbeſs,
Mrs Clack,	Nun.

Soldiers, Porters, Shoe-blacks, &c.

ACT I.

ACT I.

SCENE, *Hotel d'Angleterre.*

Enter Kit Cable, Dick Drugget, *and* Jenny Minnikin.

Cable. HARKEE, meſſmate! look about! you had better bring-to, in this creek: here you will find the beſt moorings. The *Hotel d'Angleterre* they calls it in French; but you'll find the names of things plaguily tranſmogrified all along this coaſt.

Dick. They be civil people, no doubt.

Cable. Civil? ay, ay; if you will bring a good cargo of caſh, you are welcome to anchor here as long as you liſt: but you will find the duties high at out-clearance; therefore take care, d'ye ſee, and don't run aground. I muſt take t'other trip to the port, for your ſtowage. [*Exit.*

Dick. I hope by this time your ſea-ſickneſs is pretty well gone?

Jenny. Much mended, dear Dicky, I thank you.

Dick. Well, my dear Jenny, hear we are, ſafely landed in the French country, however. And now, what's next to be done? Conſider, my love, we have not a moment to loſe; your father will not be long behind us, I am ſure.

Jenny. No queſtion of that; therefore our beſt way will be to get out of his power as ſoon as we can.

Dick. By what means?

Jenny. By the means which we came hither in ſearch of; by being married, you know.

Dick. True. but how the deuce ſhall we procure a parſon? Perhaps the man of the houſe may aſſiſt us: but, plague on't! I can't *parley Francee;* tho' I underſtand a few words here and there.

Jenny. But I can, Dicky, you know. What, do you think I was five years at Madam Vanſlopping's, the Swiſs French boarding-ſchool at Edmonton, for nothing at all?

Dick. True, true; I had forgot.—But I don't think it any mark of their manners, to let us wait here ſo long without aſking us in. Here, Houſe, houſe!

Jenny. Peace, Dicky! how is it poſſible they ſhould know what you want?—*Maiſon! Seignior de Terre!*

Dick. Who? what?

Jenny. Seignior de Terre is as much as to ſay landlord in Engliſh.

Dick. True, true. Oh! here the man comes.

Enter Monſieur Tromfort.

Tromf. Monſieur! Mademoiſelle!

Dick. To him, Jenny!

Jenny. Monſieur, nos ſommes Anglois, & nous avons grand occaſion d'un pretre!

Tromf. A quoi faire?

Jenny. Faire? pour nous joindre lui & moi enſemble, I think.

Dick. That is marriage, ſhe and me: you underſtand me, Mounſeer?

Tromf. Ah-ha! *pour le mariage! tres bien;* perfectly vell, Sir.

Dick. Gad's my life, he ſpeaks Engliſh! how lucky we were in the choice of a houſe!—And what may your name be, Mounſeer?

Tromf. Tromfort, at your ver good ſervice.

Dick. Why, look'ee! Mounſeer Tromfort; in a word, our buſineſs is this: this here young gentlewoman and I—

Jenny. Stop, Dicky, and let me explain matters to Monſieur Tromfort; becauſe why, I ſpeak the language, you know.

Dick. But, Miſs, our landlord underſtands Engliſh.

Jenny. No matter; don't contradict me, Dicky; you know I could not never bear that from a child. You muſt know then, Monſieur, that Mr Matthew Minnikin, my father, is one of the moſt reſpectable pin-makers in the whole city of London; and that I am his daughter.

Tromf. Ah-ha! I underſtand; Maiſter Minniky, *gros merchand d'epingle? c'eſt tout ſimple.*

Jenny. And this here young man that you ſee, is Dicky Drugget, father's 'prentice at home.

Tromf. Fort bien; ver vell!

Jenny. Now, father being minded to provide me a huſband, for fear I ſhould otherwiſe provide one for myſelf—

Tromf. Fort bien! dat vas ver vell fancy: pardie, Monſieur Minicky has great deal of wit!

Jenny. Yes, well enough; if ſo be that he had got me

a man to my mind; but he was ſo undutiful as never to think of conſulting of me.

Tromf. Oh, fy, fy, Monſieur Minicky! dat vas terrible ting.

Jenny. Ay, was it not, Monſieur? quite monſtrous, as a body may ſay; and ſo you would own, if you was to ſee the creature he fix'd on: Kit Codling, a fat fiſhmonger, hard by the 'Change. They ſay the man is well enough to paſs in the world; one of the livery, a pretty good ſpeechefyer, minds his ſhop, and is careful and ſober; but, Lord what ſignifies that? he has no more idera of dreſs than a Dutchman; and as to cotillions, I ſuppoſe he knows as much about them as a cow.

Tromf. Oh, fy, fy! *Mauvaiſe partie*, bad partie!

Jenny. And ſo, Dicky and I being bred up together, as it were, and being a genteeliſh virtuous young man—

Tromf. Ah, vas *tres gentile.*

Jenny. Yes; for except lying out all night now and then, hating to be ſo vulgar as to ſtay in the ſhop, frequenting the tavern in ſearch of good company, running his father in debt for his credit, and gracing his converſation with the oaths moſt in faſhion, I don't believe the lad has a ſingle vice in the world.

Tromf. Dat is ver extraordinary!

Jenny. And yet you can't think what an orationing father us'd to make every day: but, between you and I, Monſieur, father and mother are but a couple of fogrum old fools; ben't they, Dicky?

Dick. To ſay truth, little better, my dear.

Jenny. Why, what a noiſe they made about my only running from ſchool for three or four days with Monſieur Chaſſon, our *maitre de dance*, juſt as if they thought I would never come back again; ha, ha!

Dick. To ſay truth, Mounſeer, Miſs Jenny amongſt them had but a very bad time; for this I muſt confeſs to her face, ſhe is the moſt beſt temper'deſt girl in the world; for let her but ſay and do what ſhe pleaſes, and you will ſcarcely hear a croſs word come out of her mouth in a month.

Tromf. Vraiment?

Dick. Then, to prove what a dutiful daughter ſhe always has been, ſhe conſtantly uſed to ſteal out to ſee Breſlaw, the plays, and hear Signiora Gamberbelly at the opera,

pera, on purpoſe to prevent their being tired with her company at home

Tromf. Ver conſiderate!

Dick. And whenever the old folks charg'd her with doing any thing wrong, ſhe never told them a word of truth in her life.

Tromf. No?

Dick. No; for fear of making her parents uneaſy.

Tromf. Ver *aimable* indeed!

Jenny. Nay, Monſieur, Dicky was always very partial to me.—And ſo, we taking a fancy to one another, and to prevent father from expoſing himſelf by ſuch a ridiculous choice as Kit Codling, we agreed to give the old ones the ſlip, and take a little tour to the kingdom of France.

Tromf. Bien imaginee! dat vas vell imagin!

Dick. And ſo, Mounſeer—

Jenny. Nay, Dicky, don't interrupt me, my dear!—And ſo, as I was a-ſaying, if you can contrive to procure us a marrying doctor, for I am told there are one or two who have ſet up in that way in this town, we ſhall take it, Monſieur, as a very particular favour.

Tromf I ſhall be ver happy, *tres charmee!* to be capable to ſerve-a you.

Jenny. Vaſt polite! and indeed, as I have often told Dicky, the French always are ſo.

Tromf. Indeed, I have great regard for de Engliſ; and ven dey come over, I never refuſe my protection.

Jenny. Mighty civil, indeed!

Tromf. Why, every ſummer dere come here to my houſe a great many my lors; and I let 'em ſtay two, tree months, juſt as long as dey pleaſe.

Dick. What, for nothing, Mounſeer!

Tromf P-eſque la meme choſe! almoſt de very ſame ting; dey never pay noding at all, only juſt for dere eating, drinking, and ſleeping.

Jenny. How generous and noble!

Tromf. Yes, I alvays have great *penchant*, great partiality, for doſe of your country. Vy, dere vas ſome time ago, ven my houſe and my good vas burn down by de fire, I never vas take noding at all from de French.

Dick. No?

Tromf. Pas une ſous; but ſuffer my lors Anglois to build-a

build-a my hotel up again to dere own taſte, vidout de leaſt interruption.

Dick. How kind, to give that preference to us!

Jenny. That indeed was the very exceſs of good breeding!

Tromf. And ven dey bring over good many guinea, lumb'ring heavy great ting, I make de change vid de Louis, dat vas ſo pretty, and as light as de cork.

Jenny. How diſintereſted!

Tromf. And as I know Meſſieurs les Anglois come here to improve demſelves by travel in France, I adviſe dem always to ſtay here as long as dey can, and never to tink of going home, till all dere monies be gone.

Dick. What a fine thing it is to get ſuch a friend in foreign parts!

Jenny. True, Dicky. Well, but, Monſieur, do you think you can provide us with the party we want?

Tromf. Pour la mariage? for marry you? dere is no doubt.

Dick. But there is no time, Mounſeer, to be loſt, for we expect Miſs's father and mother to follow us in the very firſt ſhip.

Tromf. Dere is de Dr Coupler live juſt-a by, in de very next ſtreet.

Jenny. Then ſend for him directly.

Tromf. Very probable he is not at home at dis time.

Dick. No?

Tromf. He commonly take de opportunity of deſe dark night, to ſtep croſs de Shannel, and ſupply his friend on t'oder ſide vid de brandy and tea.

Dick. Oh, what, I reckon, the doctor ſmuggles a little?

Tromf. Yes, for little amuſement, juſt *pour paſſer le temps;* for he is ver fond of de ſea.

Dick. Will you enquire, Mounſeer, if we cannot meet with the doctor?

Tromf. A l'inſtant; dis very moment.

Enter a very old Waiter.

Eh bien? La Jeuneſſe! vat is de matter?

La Jeu. Dere is anoder veſſel from Dover, juſt-a put into de port.

Dick. Is there? Then ten to one your father is in her!

Tromf. Dat vill be ver *mal-a-propos!*

Dick.

Dick. Hadn't I better run down to the key, and take a peep at who lands.

Tromf. By all mean; de very beſt dought in de vorld.

Dick. Stay you here, Miſs; I will be back in a trice. [*Exit.*

Tromf. A ver pretty gentleman, dat Maiſter Druggy!

Jenny. Yes, Dicky is thought very well on.

Tromf. He has ver great head; *beaucoup de politique!*

Jenny. Yes, yes; he has wit enough when he will.

Tromf. Ma foi, Maiſter Dicky be *fort!* a ver happy man, to be ſure!

Jenny. How ſo, Monſieur Tromfort?

Tromf. How ſo? *pardie,* to have engage de affection of ſo *aimable* a Mademoiſelle.

Jenny. Dear me, Monſieur, and d'ye think ſo.

Tromf. Aſſurement.

Jenny. Really? But you French are ſo given to flattery?

Tromf. Point de tout, not at all! Vill you permit-a me, Mademoiſelle, juſt to have de honour to kiſs-a your hand?

Jenny. My hand, Monſieur? what good can that do you?

Tromf. Ah! my God! how fine! vite as ſnow, and ſoft as de ſilk! Vat vould I give to be dat dere Monſieur Dicky!

Jenny. Why, is it poſſible, Monſieur, that you can think me equal to your own country ladies?

Tromf. Ah, Mademoiſelle, dere is no compariſon at all in de vorld: vat havock your charm vould make in dis country!

Jenny. I am not quite ſo certain of that.

Tromf. Dere is no doubt at all: *pour la preuve;* de very firſt-a Frenchman's you vas ſee, is proud to drow himſelf at your feet.

Jenny. At mine? who can that be, Monſieur?

Tromf. Votre tres humble, Mademoiſelle, it is *moi,* me myſelf.

Jenny. You?

Tromf. Moi. Permit-a me, Mademoiſelle, to declare de force of my paſſion, dat burn my ver—

Jenny. For me? why I have ſcarce been in your company a couple of minutes.

Tromf. Von inſtant is enough for your charm to make-a de conqueſt; de very firſt glance, your bright eyes ſhoot me quite

quite to de heart. Ah! how it make-a me pat, pat, pat, pat! *Fait moi l'honneur* to place-a your hand juſt here a my ſide.

Jenny. Here is an audacious old fop! I'll try how far the impudent puppy will go.—Why, really, Monſieur, you're ſo amiable, and your manners ſo very polite, and ſo civil, that if it had not been for a prior engagement, I don't know but I might be tempted to liſten.

Tromf. Courage, Monſieur Tromfort! Stay but a little time, Maiſter Dicky, begar I make you a cocu before you vas marry. [*aſide.*]—Engagement! vat is dat?

Jenny. The young man you ſaw here but now.

Tromf. Maiſter Dicky; ver vell?

Jenny. We are come over hither to marry, you know.

Tromf. Vy not?

Jenny. What, and at the ſame time encourage another's addreſſes?

Tromf. To be ſure. *En France*, de lady alvays take de huſband to make ſure of de lover; de one *pour la politique*, de oder for de paſſion.

Jenny. Ay: but what would my countrywomen ſay at ſo very quick a—

Tromf. Say? ah-ha! ſhe begin to capitulate. [*aſide.*] —Say? dat you take de ver viſe ſtep. Oh, Mademoiſelle, dere be many pretty my lady who vait at my hotel for de vind, dat can tell many comic ſtorie of Monſieur Tromfort.

Jenny. Oh, I don't doubt it at all!—Was there ever ſuch an impudent coxcomb!—If one did but know, indeed, the name of ſome of the ladies, it would be a kind of excuſe.

Tromf. Pardonnez moi! jamais de man of honour; never tell de name of de lady. *La voies!* looky here! look at dis *plumet*; dis pretty white fedder [*ſhews a ſhabby white feather;*] dis trophy of my victory I receive from de hand of de pretty my lady.

Jenny. That indeed is a proof; and yet, Monſieur, it is a ſort of wonder too, for you are not over young, nor, between ourſelves, remarkably handſome; and beſides all that, you have but one eye.

Tromf. Dat is true; but den conſider, Mademoiſelle, dat de little god Cupid has got never a vone.

Jenny. Right; and I believe the lady muſt have been near as blind as the god.

Tromf.

Tromf. Not at all. But, *ma chere* Mademoiſelle, we loſe time; and Maiſter Dicky may come back from de port. Dere is, in dis littel room, de ver pritt picter, which permit-a me to have de honour to ſhew you.

Jenny. Nay, but, Monſieur—

Tromf. Dere muſt be a littel compulſion to make de lady do vat ſhe like [*pulls her.*] *Venez ma!*

Jenny. Hands off, you inſolent ruffian! [*Strikes him.*

Tromf. Diable!

Jenny. The vanity and impudence of this fellow exceeds all the accounts I have heard of his country.

Tromf. By gar, for de ſoft hand, it is de moſt hard I ever vas feel!

Jenny. Not half ſo much as you merit. A pretty account you give of the Engliſh; and a fine return for all the favours you have received at their hands!

Tromf. Pardie, c'eſt une eſpece de virago.—Mais, Mademoiſelle!

Jenny. However, the gentleman will ſoon be back, and return you thanks for this piece of civility.

Tromf. Mais, Mademoiſelle, you vas know de mode of dis country, de littel gallantry to de pretty fine vomans.

Jenny. Gallantry! what, from a fellow like you, a pitiful publican?

Tromf. Diable! publican? dat be good enough for de maker of pin.

Jenny. Here he comes.

Enter Dick Drugget.

Dick. Zounds, Miſs, here they all be!

Jenny. All! who?

Dick. Father, mother, and your aunt Clack, the milliner from out of Pall-Mall.—But, you ſeem flurried; there has nothing happened, I hope.

Jenny. Happened? that ſaucy Frenchman has taken ſuch liberties!

Dick. How!—Zounds, Sir, how dare you—

Tromf. Monſieur Dicky—

Jenny. Nay, the fellow is only fit to be laughed at: beſides, at preſent we want him.—Harkee, Monſieur, if you wiſh to have your folly forgot, and not be expoſed, as you richly deſerve, you muſt immediately lend your aſſiſtance.

Tromf. Vid *plaiſir.*

Jenny.

Jenny. Where can I conceal myſelf from my angry relations?

Tromf. Dere is but littel time for to tink. Ah-ha! I have it. I vill dis inſtant put you into de *couvent*, vere my ſiſter is nun.

Jenny. But they will ſoon find me out, and force me from them.

Tromf. You muſt pretend to have de grand inclination to become de bon catolick.

Jenny. And will that do?

Tromf. Never fear! Mademoiſelle *eſt bien riche;* and de French prieſt never give up de convert ven ſhe have got great deal of guinee, *jamais.*

Jenny. In the mean time, what is to become of my friend?

Tromf. De beſt way for Maiſter Dicky is to take de littel trip to Dunkirk or Boulonge, till matters be ſettle.

Jenny. May I venture, Monſieur, to truſt myſelf in your hands.

Tromf. By gar, Mademoiſelle, dere is more danger from your hand dan from mine!

Jenny. We Engliſh, Monſieur, are an odd ſort of people; it is near as dangerous to provoke our women as men.

Tromf. By gar, I believe ſo. No, no; *l'affair eſt faite;* I have done. *Ma femme*, my littel wife, ſhall conduct Mademoiſelle—La Jeuneſſe! [*Calls.*

Enter La Jeuneſſe.

La Jeu. Monſieur?

Tromf. Go to my vife; tell her to take Mademoiſelle to de *couvent*, and leave her dere vid my ſiſter. After dinner, I vill bring you de news to de grate.

Jenny. Well, Dicky, adieu! expect to hear from me ſoon.

Dick. Be as quick as you will, I ſhall think it an age. Deareſt Jenny, farewell! [*Exit.*

Tromf. Juſque a revoir, Mademoiſelle!

Jenny. Servant, Monſieur Tromfort!

Tromf. Ma foi, Mademoiſelle be a great littel fool, to prefer Monſieur Dicky to ſuch anoder as me. By gar, de Englis voman have no judgment at all! ſhe vill repent by and bye; more pity for ſhe!—La Jeuneſſe!

Enter La Jeuneſſe.

Have you ſent doſe bag of guinea to Dunkirk, to be melt?

La Jeu. Oui, Monſieur.

Tromf. Ver vell. [*Exit* La Jeuneſſe.]—*Apres tout Meſſieurs l'Anglois*, all de Englis people, be ver great fool, to come here, ſpend dere money, in ſearch after vat dey never will find! to ſhange dere roſta beef and pudding, for our rotten ragout; ſee de comedy, de play, dey don't comprehend; talk vid de people dey don't underſtand; *tant mieux!* ſo much de better! In ver few year, I ſhut up my hotel, ſet up my coach, my caroſſe, and call myſelf Monſieur le Marquis de Guinea, in compliment to Meſſieurs *l'Anglois*; ver pritt title, by gar! ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Enter La Jeuneſſe, Mr *and* Mrs Minnikin, Mrs Clack, *and* Kit Codling.

Mrs Min. This unnatural huſſy, to run thus away from her parents! and into foreign parts, as they ſay, amongſt Pagans and Papiſts, and a parcel of—And here we have been toſs'd and tumbled about, that I don't know whether I ſtand upon my head or my heels.

Min. And then that lanthorn-jaw'd hound at the gate, to ſeize my tobacco-box! and I'll be ſworn there was not a couple of pipe-fulls.

Mrs Min. Ay, ay, poor toads, they are glad to get hold of any thing they can get. Well, if I once more get ſight of old Powl's, if ever they get me below Bridge again, unleſs a-pleaſuring, perhaps, during the ſummer, in a hoy to Margate—Pray, ſon Codling, how long were we in ſailing over the ſea?

Codl. I can tell you, Madam Minnikin, exact to a minute, becauſe why, I have promis'd neighbour Index, the printer, to make obſerwations on all the ſtrange things that I ſee, that he may print them next time, 'long with his Six Weeks Tour to the Continent. Let's ſee; here is my journal: [*reads*] "June the 10th, embarked at ſeven in the morning, at Dover, aboard the Mercury, vind ſouth and by eaſt; nine o'clock, vind wear a little to the veſt; ſhell'd half a buſhel of peas; eleven o'clock, vind ditto, eat ditto; twelve and half, pluck'd a couple of fowls; very odd to ſee how the vind blew the feathers about; *nota bene*, feathers will ſwim in the ſalt ſea."

Min.

Min. Vaſt curus obſervations, indeed!

Mrs Min. Nay, I always ſaid, ſon Codling had a good head of his own. Why, Matthew Minnikin, if he goes on but as he begun, I don't know but his'n may be as uſeful as many of the voyages that have been printed of late.

Min. Ay, Margery, if he could but get ſome ſtrange beaſteſſes, or carry home a foreign ſavage or two, for a ſhow.

Mrs Min. But go on, ſon Codling, I beg!

Codl. "Two o'clock, road beginning to be conſumedly "rough, was ſo much jolted, that I could not write any "more."

Mrs Min. Write? I'm ſure I was not able to ſtand; ſo they popp'd me into a hole in the wall, I think they call'd it a *cabin*; Lord bleſs us, 'twas more liker a coffin!

Clack. The ſea has been rather rumbuſtious, I own; but then, ſiſter, the land makes us ample amends.

Mrs Min. Amends! in what way?

Clack. Bleſs me, ſiſter, how can you aſk? I profeſs I feel myſelf quite a different perſon: the people here are all ſo gay, and well-bred! Did not you obſerve, when I accidentally ſneez'd, how politely all the people pull'd off their hats?

Mrs Min. Pſhaw! what ſignifies their grins and grimaces, their ſcrapes and congees? do you, ſiſter, ſeriouſly think, that the French folks are more cleverer than we?

Clack. Ridiculous! is there a mortal can doubt it? Why, without their aſſiſtance, how ſhould we be able to dreſs ourſelves, or our victuals? And then, as to cleverneſs, did you obſerve thoſe little children, as we came up from the key?

Mrs Min. Yes; and to my thinking, I never ſaw ſuch a parcel of brown brats in my life.

Clack. I declare I was aſham'd, quite bluſh'd, for my country, to hear mere infants, quite babies, as I may ſay, ſputter French, more freer and glibber than your daughter Jane, who has had a French maſter theſe five years.

Mrs Min. That's true, I muſt own; but then I don't find that they be more cuter to get our lingo, than we to learn theirs.

Clack. Becauſe why, they think it beneath them.

Mrs Min. Who the deuce be all theſe?

Enter

Enter ſeveral Porters with ſmall parcels.

La Jeu. De porter from de cuſtom-houſe, along vid your baggage.

Codl. Baggage? zooks, any one of theſe might have carried it all.

Clack. Ay! there, there, brother, you have another proof of their breeding; all of them eager to be uſeful to ſtrangers.

Min. Yes, pox take them, in hopes, I ſuppoſe, of being handſomely paid. Well, Monſieurs, how much are you to have?

Clack. Fy, Mr Minnikin! don't expoſe your meanneſs, the moment you are landed. Monſieur, you will ſatisfy theſe gentlemen for the trouble they have taken. And, Mr Codling, do try and get us a good room, if you can.

La Jeu. Venez ici!

[*Exeunt Porters, bowing and ſcraping.*

Min. Hey-day! who the deuce have we here?

Mrs Min. As I live, a couple of ſhoe-blacks, with muffs and bag-wigs!

Enter Shoe-blacks, who bow with great ceremony, and take ſnuff.

Min. There, there, Margery! doſt thou ſee? mark their ſmirking, bowing, and ſneezing!

Clack. Ay, ſiſter Minnikin, there! you ſee how courteous and civil the very loweſt people are here: ſhew me a ſhopkeeper, in your whole ward, that can do his honours ſo well! See how politely they offer their ſnuff to each other; and look! if the ſweet little creatures are not ſet down to cards on their ſtools!

Min. Yes, yes; I ſee well enough.

Clack. Not like our vulgar fellows, at putt or all-fours, but a party at piquet, I'll be ſworn!

Enter La Jeuneſſe, Luke Lapelle, *and* Gregory Gingham.

La Jeu. Dis vay, my Lor! one, two, dree ſtep; take care-a my Lor!

Mrs Min. Bleſs me, my dear, if here a'n't Mr Lapelle, from Bond-ſtreet! and neighbour Gingham, as ſure as a gun! freſh from Paris, I warrant.

Min.

Min. Well met, neighbour Gingham! What, you've been fetching home faſhions, I reckon?

Ging. Huſh, Mr Minnikin! there is no need to make proclamation in foreign parts of what buſineſs we be.

Clack. Brother Minnikin's tongue will now and then run too faſt for his wit.

Min. Nay, I ſaid nothing, I am ſure.

Lap. Excuſe moi, Monſieur Minnikin! you mentioned fetching of faſhions; and that, as the French ſay, was *tantaramount* to calling us tailors.

Clack. The very ſame thing.

Min. Why, ſure, Gregory Gingham, thee be'ſt not aſhamed of thy calling, be'ſt?

Ging. That is another man's matter, you knows: how is it our fault (d'ye mind me?) if the French folks will take us for lords? They ſaw ſomething in us that was above the vulgar, I reckon.

Mrs Min. Nay, for the matter of that, Matthew, it is at worſt but being quit with Mounſeer; for, I'll be ſworn, there are many of their Counts and Marquiſes that comes over to us (aye, and are received by the beſt quality too, at their tables), who, if the truth was known, are little better than tailors at home.

Codl. Right! well ſaid, Madam Minnikin! With this odds in their favour (plague take 'em!) that them there fellows make a good hand and profit by their pride and preſumption; whilſt our fooliſh fokls are forced to pay pretty high fees for their titles. I reckon, your *lordſhips* were ſwingingly ſous'd on the road?

Ging. To ſay truth, the bills did mount pretty high, and we did not chuſe to chaffer with them, becauſe why, we wa'n't willing to bring a diſgrace on our dignity.

Clack. Wiſely done, for the honour of England!

Codl. Honour? I can't ſay that ever I heard that old England received much honour from tailors; unleſs, indeed, when they liſted in Elliot's light-horſe.

Lap. That may be the caſe, Mr Minnikin, with thoſe of the trade who live in the city; but I would have you to know, the knights of the needle are another ſort of people at our end of the town.

Clack. Doubtleſs.

Lap. It is not in the faſhions only that we take the lead; we

we rule likewiſe over the *belles lettres*, as the French call them.

Min. How?

Lap. Give laws to the drama; damn a play when we pleaſe; or hiſs an actor off the ſtage, when we take a diſlike to the raſcal.

Codl. Ay? it is the firſt I ever heard of a tailor's gooſe hiſſing!

Lap. Yes, yes; why, I myſelf, at the head of my journeymen, have more than once played the part of *the public*.

Min. You ſurprize me!

Lap. And am known, at all our houſes of call, by the name of Tom Town.

Clack. Mr Lapelle, you are but loſing your labour: honeſt good ſort of people enough; but mere cits, quite ignorant of what is going on in the world!

Lap. Yes, yes, they look of that cut; not of the right ſtuff, as the French ſay, to make *bucks deſprits* on.

Clack. And pray what news is ſtirring in Paris?

Lap. *Toujours* gay, as the French ſay, Mrs Clack.

Mrs Min. I reckon there be powers of our country folks there.

Lap. I ſuppoſe ſo; for I ſaw a good many aukward people, as they ſay, *a la comedy*, and at the *Coloſſus*; but I choſe to avoid them.

Mrs Min. And why ſo?

Codl. I reckon there were ſome of his maſters amongſt them; and it would not have been decent to be too forward, for a tradeſman, like he.

Lap. *Pardonnez moi!* that was not it; it is always the rule with me, when I travels, to avoid *les Anglois*, as the French ſay, the Engliſh, as much as I can.

Codl. I reckon the French, as they don't know his trade, are more politer and civil.

Lap. No; there's a roughneſs, a *bourgoiſy*, about our barbarians, that is not at all to my taſte; not a bit, as the French ſay, to my *gout*.

Clack. I don't wonder at it. I hope you left the royal family all in good health.

Lap. Yes; Mr *le Roi*, as the French ſay, looked pretty jolly; and I was at his grand *couvert*, and *cowſbee* a-Sunday: his Majeſty looked at me very hard.

Clack. Indeed?

Mrs Min.

Mrs Min. Ay; wondering, I ſuppoſe, how ſuch a one as he could contrive to get in.

Lap. This relation of yours, Mrs Clack, is but a low kind of a body.—No, no, Mrs Minnikin; his Majeſty and I have been acquainted; many a time and oft have I been at court, when he was only the *dolphin*.

Clack. Pray, how long, Mr Lapelle, was you coming from Paris?

Lap. Two days and a night.

Clack. Are the accommodations good upon the road?

Lap. Their horſes, their *chevaux*, as the French call them, are not quite ſo nimble as our'n; but then, to make amends, like the French, I *courier* the poſt, without ſtopping; unleſs, perhaps, to take a ſlight *repas* of a bit of *jambon*, or a *hamlet*.

Min. But how do you like your jaunt, neighbour Gingham? You are rather ſilent, I think.

Lap. This, you know, is only Gingham's firſt trip: beſides, to like Paris, a man muſt *parle vous* in perfection; ſpeak their lingor perfectly well.

Ging. For the matter of that, Mr Lapelle, the poſtilions did not ſeem to take very readily all that you ſaid on the road.

Lap. Them there fellows! how ſhould they? mere country bumpkins! little better, as we ſay in French, than a parcel of *pheaſants!*

Clack. Ay, hogs, I ſuppoſe, like our own.

Lap. True, Mrs Clack; quite *cowchaus*, as we ſay.

Mrs Min. Have they pretty good victuals in theſe parts, neighbour Gingham?

Ging. Victuals? ſoup, that taſted as if wrung from a diſh-clout, and rags ſtewed in vinegar, are all the victuals I have ſeen.

Lap. Ah! poor Gingham has a true Engliſh ſtomach; nothing will do but ſubſtantials; he has no taſte for *ragoutes, intermeats*, and *rottis*.

Ging. Nay, you know, at the laſt town, my wife fiſhed out a large piece of blue apron upon the top of her fork.

Mrs Min. What! did Mrs Gingham come with you?

Ging. Yes; and is about as well pleaſed as myſelf.

Mrs Min. Where is ſhe?

Ging. In a room hard by, with Mrs Lapelle.

Lap. How often have I cautioned you not to give her that

that name here in France? ſuppoſe any of the people ſhould hear you!

Clack. What, then, I ſuppoſe it is not Mrs Lapelle, that is, your real wife, that is with you?

Lap. Yes, yes; but you know nothing can be ſo vulgar in France, as voyaging about with one's wife; ſo I make her paſs for my miſtreſs, and always calls her Mademoiſelle.

Clack. And ſhe fares never the worſe, I'll be ſworn.

Lap. Au contraire, as they ſay; beſides, it is the onlieſt method to keep her to one's ſelf.

Mrs Min. How ſo?

Lap. No Frenchman ſcruples to make love to a wife; becauſe why, 'tis not the faſhion for the huſband to care a farthing about her; but to ſeduce a man's miſtreſs, that he is imagined to love, is a crime that is never forgiven.

Clack. Lord, Mr Lapelle, we are like the French in a great many things.

Lap. Yes, we endeavour; and, to ſay truth, improve every day in our morals.

Clack. But mayn't we join the ladies within?

Lap. By all means—but mind the caution I gave!—Yes; Mademoiſelle and I by accident picked up Gingham and wife. We met them in the Fauxbourg of St German; and as we were to ſet out about the ſame time, we thought it would be, as the French ſay, for us four to come to Calais together, an agreeable *tete-a-tete* on the road.

Clack. Well, I ſhould like vaſtly to ſee Paris before my return; but the journey is ſo very expenſive! coſt a world of money, no doubt?

Lop. Why, as I know how to manage, not altogether ſo much: it is true, we paid our bills like lords, on the road; but it ſhall go hard, Mrs Clack, if I do'nt make the real lords refund, when I ſend in their bills.

Clack. All the reaſon in life.

Lap. This, with a good cargoe of lace conveyed by Mademoiſelle, and ſome rich ſuits that I know how to ſmuggle ſafely to Dover, will, I ſhould think, carry me ſcot-free to Bond-ſtreet.—But, pray, what brings all your family?

Clack. We will inform you within.

Lap. Gingham, you will eſcort Mrs Minnikin? Mrs Clack, as the French ſay, will you accept of my *braſs?*

[*Exeunt with ceremony.*

ACT

ACT II.

A French Apartment.

Enter Mr *and* Mrs Minnikin *and* Mrs Clack.

Mrs Min. I TELL you, Matthew, it is all a purtence, merely to keep out of our hands! Why, what ſhould ſhe do in a convent?

Min. Mayhap, Margery, ſhe may take it in her head to turn nun.

Mrs Min. Lord, Matthew, how can'ſt think of any ſuch a thing? She nun! no, no; ſhe's more likely by half to bring people into the world, than to take any one out on't. What ſay you, ſiſter Clack?

Clack. I am pretty much of your mind, I muſt confeſs; but we ſhall know more of the matter when Kit Codling comes back.

Min. D'ye think they'll permitt'n to ſee her?

Mrs Min. That, I ſuppoſe, will depend on herſelf. Oh, here comes Mr Codling.

Enter Codling.

Well, ſon, what news from the runagate? have you ſeen her?

Codl. Not I: they firſt ſhew'd me up to a room with iron rails at one end, like a begging-grate; and upon ringing the bell, there popped out of t'other ſide the bars an old gentlewoman, dreſt in a blanket, with a black handkerchief over her head.

Mrs Min. Yes; I have heard the Papiſhes have ſuch dreſſes amongſt them: who was ſhe?

Codl. I took her to be one of the clergywomen that belong to the place. I aſked, if they had veigled one Miſs Minnikin into their clutches, in hopes to make her a Papiſh: at the word *veigled*, the old woman turn'd up the whites of her eyes, and with her hands croſs her ſtomach, like a child that is ſaying her catechiſe, made a jaculation; I fancy, in the outlandiſh tongue; upon which, I told her to let me have none on her hypocriſy canting, but to anſwer direct to my queſtions.

Clack. How rude! it was lucky ſhe did not underſtand you.

Codl. Underſtand me? yes, as well as you do: pho, mun, they be all Engliſhwomen that be locked up in that church. She owned that Miſs Jenny was there.

Mrs Min. She did?

Codl. Then I aſked if I could not change a few words with her, by way of a little diſcourſe; they ſaid no, becauſe why, Miſs was out of order at preſent.

Min. A pretence; nothing elſe.

Codl. So I reckon. Then I deſired the gentlewoman to open the hatch, and let me in doors to ſee her, for I had a word or two for her private ear from her parents; upon that, the old goſſop ſet up ſuch a grumbling, called me profligate harrytick, and wondered I could be ſo empiety to think they ever ſuffered a man to enter their doors; 'pon that, I told her, that if none of her compliſhes were more handſome than ſhe, ecod they might open their doors without any great danger: ha, ha! this made the old one as mad as the deuce!

Clack. I tould you what would happen, if you ſent ſuch a rough creature as he.

Codl. No; we grew more milder at laſt; and ſhe offer'd to ſhew her, if her father and mother would come.

Mrs Min. Then, Matthew, let us go to her this inſtant! Son Codling will ſhew us the way.

Codl. For the matter of that, I don't believe you will ſpeed much better than me.

Clack. And why not?

Codl. When I aſk'd her, if as how ſhe thought Jenny had ſeruſly a mind to turn to their way, ſhe ſaid ſhe didn't make the leaſt doubt on't; for that Miſs had all the true outward and viſible ſigns of an inward vacation.

Mrs Min. Who have we here?

Enter Father O'Donnovan, *a Capuchin.*

Codl. I don't know; a mountebank, I reckon; or may-hap a man that ſhews ſleight of hand.

O'Don. Save you, good jontlemen!

Mrs Min. No, no; it is an Engliſhman, I know by his tongue.—Well, friend, who and what are you?

O'Don. Plaiſe you, I am a poor Capuchin, that belongs to this convent here in the town.

Codl.

Codl. Capuchin? and pray, honeſt friend, what trade is that in the French?

O'Don. Trade! the devil a bit of a trade that it is: by my ſhoul, if I had a mind to be of a trade, do you think I would have quitted my haymaking in England?

Mrs Min. What is it, then, that you follow!

O'Don. It is a kind of profeſſion, my dear.

Mrs Min. A profeſſion!

O'Don. Ay; we makes profeſſions of poverty, that we may be ſure to want for nothing as long as we live.

Codl. And how do you get what you want?

O'Don. By aſking it from thoſe that can give it.

Codl. Godſo! then you are a beggar, I fancy.

O'Don. Who? a beggar? what the devil put that in your head?

Mrs Min. What dy'e call yourſelf elſe?

O'Don. I am only a mendicant, honey.

Codl. I wonders you prefer ſo idle a life.

O'Don. And why ſo? d'ye think that I would not rather that other people ſhould work for me, than work for myſelf? not that I ſhould mind working neither, but only becaaſe it is ſo very laborious.

Mrs Min. And are folks now very charitable in this here part of the world?

O'Don. Charitable! the devil of any charity's in it: it is, honey, a Chriſtian kind of a bargain, ſtruck up among us, I think.

Clack. A bargain?

O'Don. Ay; whilſt they work for us, we pray for them; they take care of our bodies, and, in return, my dear, we take care of their ſhouls.

Codl. Souls! never ſtir, father, if this ben't one of their friars!

Mrs Min. Sure as can be, ſon Codling has hit it. Who can tell, huſband, as he is our countryman, and one of the gang, but, for a little ſpill of money, he may put us in a way to get our daughter out of their clutches?

Min. It is but trying, however.

Mrs Min. And pray, good Sir, by what name may we call you?

O'Don. Father O'Donnovan, at your humble ſarvice.

Mrs Min. Will you do us the favour to ſtep a little this way?—Son Codling, have a look out, that we ben't interrupted.—

terrupted.—Why, you muſt know, that a daughter of ours has run away from her friends, and *voluns noluns*, taken ſhelter here in a cloiſter.

O'Don. Run away from her friends? By my ſhoul, that was very fooliſhly done!

Mrs Min. Now, if you could put us in a way, by hook or by crook, to get her out of the convent—

O'Don. Me? what, me? to get a parſon out of a convent?

Mrs Min. If you would be ſo kind to aſſiſt—

O'Don. Fy! conſider, woman, what you are aſking.

Min. Nay, Sir!

O'Don. Upon my conſcience here is one of the moſt blackeſt conſpiracies broke out againſt Popery, ſince gunpowder treaſon.

Mrs Min. Patience, ſweet Sir!

O'Don. To tempt one of my order to be guilty of ſacrednefs!

Mrs Min. Indeed, good Sir, I had no ſuch thing in my head.

O'Don. Pace, woman! What is it better than ſacredneſs, to break into a convent, and take any cratur out by compulſion?

Mrs Min. But, Sir—

O'Don. I tell you, even to force a young woman from thence, that is willing to lave it, is one of the biggeſt robberies that can be committed.

Mrs Min. My dear—

O'Don. And, to extenuate the matter, here is a dutiful poor young body, that flies from her parents, and takes refuge in the arms of the church—

Mrs Min. Hear me a word, reverend Sir!

O'Don. We ſhall ſee what the Commandant will ſay to this buſineſs! Take my word for it, my friends, you will be all ſaaz'd in an inſtant, and locked up in priſon aboard the gallies for the reſt of your lives.

Mrs Min. Mercy on us!—Siſter Clack, try if you can't mollify his choler a little, or we ſhall be clap'd up in the quiſition directly.

Clack. Can you, reverend Sir, be ſo cruel to your country folks here—

O'Don. Pace, woman!

Clack. Indeed they had no bad intentions; they only wanted

wanted to aſk your Reverence's advice, and meant to leave a ſmall ſum in your hands—

O'Don. Sum? do you main to inſult me? Don't you know, woman, that we muſt never touch money?

Clack. To beſtow upon poor objects that want it; but, if ſo be your Reverence is forbidden to touch it, why, to be ſure, we won't dare to—

O'Don. Why, lookee, Miſtreſs; to handle money is againſt the rules of our order, which we dare not break through: if, indeed, it was put into a purſe, why, there would be no occaſion, d'ye ſee, for me to touch it.

Clack. Brother Minnikin, have you ever a purſe?

Mrs Min. Here, here is mine, ſiſter Clack.

O'Don. Why, as you ſaam to be well diſpoſed people, and only want a little wholeſome advice; why, that, d'ye ſee, may alter the caſe.

Mrs Min. Nothing elſe, indeed, reverend Sir.

O'Don. Why, d'ye mind me, it would not be dacent for me to ſtir in this matter; becaaſe why, as we are monks, you know, it is our duty to bring over and pervert as many ſhouls as we can.

Mrs Min. True, reverend Sir; but there is nothing of that in the matter; the girl, heaven knows, has no more mind to be perverted than any of us.

O'Don. How! more ſhame for her! but may I belave you!

Mrs Min. All a pretence, nothing elſe; ſhe is run away with an idle 'prentice of ours, to avoid that young man there before you.

O'Don. Have you brought with you no letters of recommendation to any ſtrangers of your acquaintance that live in this town?

Mrs Min. We know no mortal; we have not been landed an hour.

O'Don. Becaaſe a little intereſt in this caſe would go a great way; not but there are ſome of our own country folks, that live here in great credit: perhaps you may have known them at home.

Mrs Min. Does your Reverence remember their names?

O'Don. There is Mr MacRappum, that lives in the Square, one of the beſt natured craturs alive: he got the jail-diſtemper, by attending his own trial at the Old Bailey.

Mrs Min. Poor gentleman!

O'Don.

O'Don. So the judge adviſed him to try for ſeven years the air of America.

Mrs Min. And did he reap any benefit?

O'Don. He has put off the jaunt for a while.

Mrs Min. Why ſo?

O'Don. I don't know; they talk that that place is all in combuſtion at preſent; ſo being a paceable man, he choſe to be ſet down here in his way.

Mrs Min. Doſt know him, Matthew?

Min. Not I.

O'Don. Then there is one 'Squire Copywell, that is but lately come over; a very faſatious, humourſome man: he laid a bet with a frind of his, out of fun, that he would draw a bill in the hand-writing of Sir Timothy Tradewell, ſo like that the banker ſhould pay it without heſitation.

Mrs Min. And did he?

O'Don. You may ſay that: but, when they come to find out the miſtake, the banker, being a cruſty dull fellow, and not underſtanding a joke, talked of going to law with the 'ſquire.

Mrs Min. Lord bleſs us! how could they—

O'Don. Nay, I don't know, my ſhoul; them there Engliſh have ſome ſtrange maxims amongſt them; ſo the 'ſquire, not caring to throw away his money to lawyers, choſe to come and live here, rather than make any more words of the matter.

Clack. I'd have done the very ſame thing, had I been the 'ſquire.

O'Don. Nay, for the matter of that, you have no more manners than morality among you in England.

Mrs Min. How, reverend Sir! I thought we was remarkable for—

O'Don. Pace woman, and hold your [illegible]llaver! Was there ever ſuch ill breeding as Lord Conſtant's to Sir Henry Hornbeam, that lives hard by here at Ardres.

Clack. Indeed, I never heard nothing about it.

O'Don. My lord was obligated to go about his affairs into the north for a month, and left his diſconſolate lady behind him in London.

Mrs Min. Poor gentlewoman!

O'Don. Upon which, his friend Sir Henry uſed to go and ſtay there all the day, to amuſe and divert her.

Mrs Min. How good-natured that was in Sir Henry!

O'Don.

O'Don. Nay, he carried his friendſhip much further than that; for my lady, as there was many highwaymen and footpads about, was afraid that ſome of them would break into the houſe, and ſo deſired Sir Henry to lie there every night.

Mrs Min. Good ſoul! and he did, I dare ſay?

O'Don. To be ſure: there is not a more politer man in the world. So, hearing in the middle of the night a little noiſe below ſtairs, he run'd down to ſee what was the matter; finding all ſafe, in coming up again, he chanced to make a little miſtake.

Mrs Min. How ſo?

O'Don. Inſtead of going to his own bed, he ſtepped into my lady's.

Clack. That might happen very well, in the dark.

O'Don. And there falling aſleep, never once found out his miſtake till the maid came up in the morning.

Clack. He muſt have been vaſtly ſurprized, to be ſure.

Mrs Min. And, I warrant me, ſo was my lady.

O'Don. Without doubt. But now comes the upſhot of all: I reckon, you ſuppoſe my lord thought himſelf much obliged to Sir Henry?

Clack. To be ſure.

O'Don. Not he, by my ſhoul! nay, more worſer than that, he had the ill manners to bring an action againſt him.

Clack. What, after Sir Harry had told him the ſtory?

O'Don. Ay, and my lady likewiſe; ſo it muſt be true, as you know, becaaſe why, they could not both be miſtaken.

Clack. There was no danger of that.

O'Don. So, Sir Harry, not chuſing to live any longer amongſt ſuch under-bred people, has ſettled here for his life.

Clack. Why, as there is ſo much good company, it muſt be vaſt agreeable living here, I ſhould think.

O'Don. You may ſay that; and indeed this place is ſo pleaſant, that every day one ingenus parſon or other comes over to live. Upon my ſhoul, among ourſelves, I belave the folks on your ſide the water begin to grow a little jealous.

Clack. No wonder.

O'Don. Inſomuch, that they have made application to the magiſtrates here to ſend ſome of them forcibly back.

Mrs Min. But I dare ſay the French were more politer than that.

O'Don.

O'Don. To be ſure. Indeed, out of compaſſion, they have compelled three or four that were poor to return; becaaſe why, it cou'dn't be very agreeable to them, you know, to live here without money.

Mrs Min. To be ſure.

O'Don. And then, the Engliſh are indulged in the free exerciſe of their religion.

Mrs Min. Oh, then they go to church?

O'Don. No, no; if they find 'em preaching or praying, they hang up the miniſter, and ſend the congregation all to the gallies.

Mrs Min. Doſt hear that, Matthew Minnikin?

O'Don. So now, as I was a-telling, if you can get any friend to ſpeak to the—Boo-boo-boo! upon my ſhoul, I had like to have forgot the moſt materialiſt parſon of all: does any of you know Lady Kitty Crocodile?

Clack. Lady Kitty! nobody better; I have had the honour of working for her ladyſhip this many years.

O'Don. Then your buſineſs will be done in a trice. Between ourſelves, the ladies always rule the roaſt in this part of the world.

Clack. I dare believe her ladyſhip will be very willing to ſerve us.

O'Don. I don't doubt it at all; ſhe is one of the moſt worthieſt women alive: ſhe cou'dn't bear to ſtay in England after the death of her huſband, every thing there put her ſo much in mind of her loſs. Why, if ſhe met by accident with one of his boots, it always ſet her a-crying; indeed the poor gentlewoman was a perfect Niobe.

Clack. Indeed, I found her ladyſhip in a very incontionable way, when I waited on her upon the mournful occaſion. Indeed, ſhe was rather more cheerful when ſhe tried on her weeds; and no wonder, for it is a dreſs vaſtly becoming, eſpecially to people inclined to be fat. But I was in hopes by this time ſhe had got over her griefs.

O'Don. Not at all, indeed. Indeed, with the French ſhe is faſatious and pleaſant enough; but ſhe no ſooner ſets ſight on any thing Engliſh, than the tears burſt out like a whirlwind.

Clack. Then, if we can do without it, we won't trouble her ladyſhip.

Mrs Min. True; we will firſt try, ſiſter, what we can do at the convent.

O'Don.

O'Don. By all means: and, d'ye hear, you need not mention any thing about the purſe; you underſtand me?

Clack. Oh, father, you need not fear us.

O'Don. Nay, it is not for that; but becaaſe one's charity, you know, ſhould be private; and therefore to devulge it would take away moſt of the merit. [*Exit.*

Clack. True, true. What's next to be done?

Mrs Min. Why, we had beſt go after the wench to the convent.

Clack. But take care what you ſay! you ſee what a hobble we had like to have got into.

Mrs Min. Never you fear; I warrant, I knows how to behave myſelf. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a Convent.*

Enter Abbeſs *and* Jenny.

Abbeſs. Only, daughter, conſider to what temptations you are expoſed in the world.

Jenny. The more merit, mother, then in me, to reſiſt them.

Abbeſs. Attacked by enemies from every quarter.

Jenny. I am a girl of ſpirit, mother, and am determined to face them.

Abbeſs. But they will be too powerful, child, for you to reſiſt.

Jenny. Then, like ableſt officers, I muſt ſurrender. I ſuppoſe there will be no danger of their refuſing me quarter.

Abbeſs. Daughter, daughter, I am afraid your affections are carnal.

Jenny. Mother, mother, they are like other girls of my age.

Abbeſs. Why won't you accept a ſpiritual ſpouſe?

Jenny. Becauſe I have found one of fleſh and blood much more to my mind.

Abbeſs. Conſider, that is a union that will continue for ever.

Jenny. And do you call that a recommendation, good mother?

Abbeſs. The other, child, muſt be finally diſſolved by death.

Jenny. Like many of my countrywomen, perhaps, I mayn't have patience to tarry altogether ſo long. But come, mother, I can, I believe, give a good gueſs at your meaning: you have a notion that I ſhould bring a pretty good fortune to this ſpouſe of your recommendation?

Abbeſs. True, daughter.

Jenny. To which, as I never heard of any children produced by this unaccountable union, you will ſucceed? Now I muſt tell you, I ha'n't a farthing of fortune.

Abbeſs. Daughter?

Jenny. I am entirely dependent upon father, who, I am poſitively ſure, won't part with a farthing to you.—He give any thing to your church, as you call it? why, he's never ſo happy as when he can rob our own vicar at home of his dues.

Abbeſs. What, daughter, have you no ſeparate portion?

Jenny. Not a doit.

Abbeſs. And your father ſo fixed an heretic as you have deſcribed him?

Jenny. Hates a Papiſh worſer than poiſon.

Abbeſs. Well, child, as I find you have no immediate call to the veil, I ſhall at this time preſs it no further: your beſt way will, I think, be to return to your father.

Jenny. Not quite ſo ſoon, if you pleaſe. I have told you what induced me to leave him; now, if you will ſcreen me from his purſuit, till I can otherwiſe diſpoſe of myſelf, tho' I am not rich, I have a few guineas here that will thank you.

Abbeſs. Why, as the compelling a daughter to marry is a profanation of one of our ſacraments, I am bound in duty, if I can, to prevent it.

Jenny. Is it? gad, I like that part of your creed well enough.

Enter a Nun.

Nun. The father and mother of that amiable child are now at the grate.

Jenny. Lord, good mother, what ſhall I do?

Abbeſs. Let them know, ſhe ſhall attend them directly.

Jenny. How, mother! [*Exit Nun.*

Abbeſs. Fear nothing! if they inſiſt on the taking you hence, urge an affection you feel for our faith, and that you

you wiſh to wait here for our ghoſtly inſtructions; in ſuch a caſe, this is a ſecure ſanctuary from the ſecular arm.

Jenny. I underſtand you, good mother. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *the Grate.*

Enter Mr *and* Mrs Minnikin, Mrs Clack, *and* Codling.

Min. This jade is the plague of our lives!

Mrs Min. Peace, Matthew! by rough means we ſhall gain nothing, I am ſure; let us try what a little mollification will do. Son Codling, keep out of ſight, if you pleaſe.

Enter the Abbeſs and Jenny.

Abbeſs. This, I preſume, is the perſon you want.

Mrs Min. Yes, Miſtreſs, this is the party, indeed.—So, Jenny, how could you be ſo naughty, child, to run away from your father and me?

Min. Yes, and to conſort with a parcel of Pap—

Mrs Min. Peace, Matthew! there be good and bad of all ſorts, as they ſay.

Min. True; and I warrant her ſhe'll make choice of the worſt.

Mrs Min. Well, but, come, Matthew, it is never too late to repent.

Clack. True, ſiſter; and I dare ſay, my niece is ready to return back with us, and will do every thing we can deſire her.

Jenny. I am ſenſible of the reſpect and duty I owe to my parents—

Mrs Min. Very well ſaid, child! it is a long lane that has no turning.

Jenny. And ſhall always be ready to obey their commands.

Min. Do you hear, Miſtreſs? then open the doors and let her come out.

Jenny. Pardon me, Sir; that cannot be.

Min. Why not?

Jenny. Becauſe a much more important duty detains me.

Min. And pray what pretty duty may that be?

Jenny. This pious and reverend lady will tell you.

Min. Come, Miſtreſs, let us have it then.

Abbeſs.

Abbeſs. Your daughter, ſon, by a miraculous operation, has had her eyes opened to the perilous paths in which ſhe was ſtraying.

Min. Yes, yes, ſhe has wandered long enough, to be ſure.

Abbeſs. And has begged our advice to direct her in the right road.

Min. And if ſhe takes it, it will be the firſt time in her life.

Abbeſs. Say not ſo, ſon; you are too raſh in your judgment.

Min. To come to the proof, will ſhe marry the young man we have provided?

Abbeſs. She has provided a better match for herſelf.

Min. The devil ſhe has! what, a 'prentice boy that wants two years to be out of his time?

Abbeſs. Son, I don't comprehend you.

Min. Dick Drugget, I mean; as arrant a ſcape-grace—

Abbeſs. Son, I know no ſuch perſon as Drugget.

Min. What, he has chang'd his name, I ſuppoſe, ſince he came over! like enough.

Abbeſs. Son, we err, I believe as to the perſon; the ſpouſe your daughter wiſhes to wed is Saint Francis.

Min. Saint Francis! who the devil is he? what, has ſhe pick'd up a Frenchman already! like enough: but if that be the caſe, Miſtreſs, you may give my ſervice to Mr Saint Francis, and tell him he ſhall never touch a ſingle penny of mine as long as he lives.

Abbeſs. Saint Francis ſtands in need of no fortune.

Min. He is ſo rich? ſo much the better for he. And you may over and above tell him, notwithſtanding ſhe looks ſo demure, that he could not have met with ſuch a head-ſtrong, obſtinate, peremptory vixen, if he had ſearched all the country round.

Abbeſs. Saint Francis will, notwithſtanding, cheriſh the dear child in his boſom.

Min. Will he? then, if the dear child don't kick his guts out in leſs than a month, ſhe is confoundedly altered! But come, Miſtreſs, mayhap, we may find friends here, although we be ſtrangers: we'll ſee if there be no laws againſt kidnapping other folks' children away!

Abbeſs. You grow indecent, ſon; we muſt leave you.

Min.

Min. In England now I would have horpurs'd corpus'd her out of your hands in an hour!

Abbeſs. Daughter, pay your reverence to your relations! [Jenny *curtſies, and retires from the grate, with the Abbeſs.*

Min. An hypocritical ſlut! And harkee, Miſtreſs! before I goes, I will tell you a bit of my mind: notwithſtanding your whining and canting, and ſanctified looks, I don't think you are a bit better than you ſhould be, d'ye ſee me; and, if the truth was known, you are little better, I believe, than an old matchmaking bawd!

Mrs Min. Matthew, conſider where you are, have a care what you ſay!

Min. Prithee, woman, be quiet! Loſers have leave to ſpeak in all countries, I hope.

Mrs Min. And of what uſe is your ſpeaking?

Clack. True, ſiſter. But come; let us go to Lady Kitty, as the friar adviſed us; perhaps ſhe may put us in a way.

Mrs Min. Right, ſiſter. Come, Matthew, there is no time to be loſt.

Min. Loſt! we had better leave her to her own wicked ways: ſhe will find that puniſhment enough in the end.

Mrs Min. But ſhe is our daughter, Matthew, you know; let us do our duty, however.

Min. Well, well! Come, ſon Codling!

Codl. I'll follow you, father, when I have made an obſervation or two, to put into neighbour Index's Tower.—"The clargywomen in theſe parts don't uſe any linen; "and inſtead of doing like our'n, they wear their woollen "ſmocks over the reſt of their cloaths. *Nota bene*, if "they can catch any young women into their clutches, "they locks them up in dens like wild beaſteſes, that are "kept in the Tower." [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *a Hotel.*

Enter Miſs Lydell *and* Hetty.

Miſs Lyd. Sure never was ſo capricious a being!

Hetty. Not of the ſame mind two minutes together! I am aſtoniſhed, Miſs, how you are able to bear it.

Miſs Lyd. I only wait for a fair occaſion to quit her Ladyſhip;

Ladyſhip; ſuch a one, I mean, as would juſtify me to my friends.

Hetty. For that, Miſs, you can't be long at a loſs.

Miſs Lyd. Ah, Hetty, it is impoſſible for you to gueſs at the half of her art: my relations, ſeduced by her frequent profeſſions, truſted me to her care, expecting, what I am ſatisfied never will happen, a permanent eſtabliſhment for me by means of her favour.

Hetty. Why, ſure, Miſs, ſhe can't for ſhame but do ſomething handſome for you, after having drag'd you in her train, as I may ſay, almoſt over the world.

Miſs Lyd. There, Hetty, is the ſource of her preſent behaviour: ſhe knows what ſhe has promiſed, and wants to force me to ſome indiſcreet act of impatience, as an apology for the breach of her faith.

Hetty. Ay? is ſhe ſo cunning as that?

Miſs Lyd. For at the ſame time that ſhe is teazing, torturing, and loading me with every mortification in private, you ſee with what particular regard and attention ſhe affects to treat me in public.

Hetty. True enough, I muſt own, Miſs; exactly like her pretended grief for Sir John: ſhe howls and cries over the poor boot, for all the world like the ſtrange creature I have read of.

Miſs Lyd. Huſh, Hetty! ſhe is here.

Enter Lady Kitty Crocodile.

Lady Kitty. In cloſe committee, I ſee! What miſchief are you two brewing together?—I am aſtoniſh'd, Miſs Lydell, at your ſeducing my ſervants; is this a proper return, Miſs, for all the obligations you owe me?

Miſs Lyd. I am ſorry your Ladyſhip ſhould think me capable—

Lady Kitty. Capable?—Leave the room, with your inquiſitive impertinent face! You want ſome tale to run tattling with to the reſt of the crew. [*To* Hetty.

Hetty. Crew? I don't underſtand what your Ladyſhip means by the *crew*; tho' we are ſervants, we may be as good Chriſtians as other people, I hope; and tho', to be ſure—

Lady Kitty. Hold your inſolent tongue, and quit the room, when I bid you!

Hetty. Crew?—With all my heart; I have no objection

tion to quitting the room, nor the houſe neither, for the matter of that. *Crew*, indeed; marry come up! [*Exit.*

Lady Kitty. So, Miſs! theſe are the fruits of your little hypocritical plots; theſe leſſons have been taught them by you.

Miſs Lyd. Me, Madam? Can your Ladyſhip ſuppoſe that I would deſcend ſo low as to—

Lady Kitty. Deſcend, Miſs? I don't underſtand you: pray, in what reſpect are you ſo much better than they? Is it becauſe I have permitted you to ſit at my table, that you give yourſelf theſe airs of importance? Though your father was parſon of the pariſh, yet I hope I was not obliged at his death to provide for all his beggarly tribe.

Miſs Lyd. Madam, I never preſumed—

Lady Kitty. And yet, has not my generoſity been extended to every branch? There was your mother; did not I, by my own ſingle intereſt, get her into the alms-houſe at Bromley; where, except meat, drink, and cloaths, ſhe is amply provided with every thing a woman in her condition can want?

Miſs Lyd. I never denied—

Lady Kitty. Was not your brother Tom, Miſs, made a guinea-pig upon my recommendation?

Miſs Lyd. Granted, Madam.

Lady Kitty. And as to you, did not I, for no reaſon that I know, unleſs indeed that you are a diſtant relation, take you into my houſe, put you above my own woman, and make you one of my maids of honour at once?

Miſs Lyd. I hope, Madam, I have not proved ungrateful.

Lady Kitty. No, Miſs? How often have I caught you ogling and throwing out lures to Sir John in his lifetime?

Miſs Lyd. I hope, Madam, Sir John never charged me with any deſigns of that nature.

Lady Kitty. No; there was your ſecurity, Miſs; you knew he was too generous and good to expoſe your infamous arts; but you could not conceal them from me!

Miſs Lyd. Nay, for Heaven's ſake, Madam—

Lady Kitty. In Italy too, there was Prince Pincoffi and Cardinal Grimſky; you could not help throwing out your traps to enſnare them.

Miſs Lyd. Me, Madam?

Lady Kitty. Yes, you; what elſe, at my aſſemblies, could

could make them prefer your converſation to mine? I hope you have not the impudence to ſuppoſe, that your perſon and figure would bear any compariſon.

Miſs Lyd. Madam, I never preſumed—

Lady Kitty. Beſides, Miſs, you know I never durſt carry you with me to any conference I had with the Pope, for fear you ſhould be trying ſome of your coquetiſh airs upon him.

Miſs Lyd. Mercy upon me!

Lady Kitty. And here too, Colonel Croſby, the only decent man in the town, when I was in Calais before, never miſſed my toilet a morning; but now, when he comes, won't tarry a moment, unleſs indeed when you are in waiting.

Miſs Lyd. I am ſo confuſed at the ſtrange charges your Ladyſhip brings, that I proteſt I don't know what anſwer to make!

Lady Kitty. I do really believe you. But you ſee, Miſs, all your little contrivances are fully diſcovered; and I ſhould tell you, Miſs Lydell, that you are the moſt artificial, cunning, hypocritical, miſchievous minx, that ever I met with, but my humanity and my good breeding prevents me: a woman of quality ſhould never loſe ſight of her ſtation.

Miſs Lyd. Was I capable of but half the crimes your Ladyſhip lays to my charge, I ſhould deteſt myſelf full as much as your Ladyſhip hates me. But I can't wiſh, Madam, that your Ladyſhip ſhould keep about your perſon a young creature to whom you have been pleaſed to take ſuch an averſion: ſend me, therefore, Madam, to my poor mother; her age and infirmities muſt want my aſſiſtance.

Lady Kitty. Who hinders you, Miſs? You may go when you pleaſe.

Miſs Lyd. Your Ladyſhip will ſend with me ſome perſon of confidence? or, at leaſt, a line to my mother, intimating, that I have neither diſhonoured myſelf, or deſerted your Ladyſhip?

Lady Kitty. So! here is another ſtroke of your art?—You want to perſuade people, that, through caprice, grown tired of your company, I have the cruelty to throw you at once upon the wide world: no, Miſs! that won't do! you ſhould be a little more careful to cover the hook.

Enter

Enter a Servant and Colonel Croſby.

Serv. Colonel Croſby. [*Exit.*

Colonel. I hope I am not an intruder.—Bleſs me, what has happened? Miſs Lydell in tears!

Lady Kitty. Yes; the poor child has juſt received a letter from her mother, one of the beſt kind of women that ever was: dry up your tears, Lydia, my love!—You ſullen, ſulking, ſtomachful ſlut!—Poor Mrs Lydell has but very bad health, Colonel Croſby; and the dear girl, who is indeed a moſt affectionate dutiful daughter—Go up to your room, you pouting, perverſe little vixen—You ſee, Colonel! but be comforted, Lydy, my dear! though you ſhould loſe your mother, you may be certain of finding a mother in me.

Colonel. I hope, Miſs, there is no immediate imminent danger.

Lady Kitty. The poor child's tender nature, and amiable heart, makes her dread the worſt that can happen.—What, is the wench petrified? move off, and don't ſtand ſniveling here!—She wiſhes, Colonel, to withdraw to her chamber: But don't brood over your ſorrows, my love! order my coach, and take a little airing, my dear!—I hope it will overturn, and break every bone in your ſkin.

[*Exit* Lydia.

Colonel. How amiable in your Ladyſhip is this attention to ſo deſerving an object!

Lady Kitty. I am afraid, Colonel, you will think it a weakneſs: exceſs of humanity is my foible, I know; but a generous mind, ſuch as yours, Colonel, will pardon the error.

Colonel. Error! it is the glory, the pride of your ſex; it is the invincible Ægis of Pallas, that muſt ſubdue every heart it attacks!

Lady Kitty. Sorrows naturally ſoften the mind; and, Heaven knows, I have had a plentiful portion. The dear man, whoſe reſemblance I wear on my wriſt—

Colonel. For Heaven's ſake, Madam—

Lady Kitty. And for ever will wear—But what neceſſity for this idle deluſion? is not thy ſweet image deeply graved in my heart?

Colonel. Indeed your Ladyſhip ſhould not give way to theſe tranſports; they may endanger your health.

Lady Kitty. Look here! Can I then lament him too much?—But thou art but gone before me, my love!

Colonel. Let me reſpect the ſacred hour of ſorrow, nor interrupt it by uſeleſs conſolation, and impertinent form! [*Exit.*

Lady Kitty. A ſhort ſpace will unite us, never to bear the torture of ſeparation again! Oh, that it was permitted me, with my own hand to ſhorten the time! this night, the arched vault ſhould incloſe us! to the cold chamber of death I would with rapture deſcend—

Enter Hetty.

How came that ill-bred puppy let in, without announcing his name?

Hetty. I fancy, Madam, the ſervants were out of the way.

Lady Kitty. That is always the caſe! Sure never was poor lady peſtered by ſuch an infamous ſet! But you all know and take advantage of my patient and mild diſpoſition.

Hetty. To be ſure, poor dove!—There are ſome Engliſh people below, beg to have the honour of ſeeing your Ladyſhip.

Lady Kitty. Do I know them?

Hetty. Mrs Clack of Pall-Mall, with two or three more.

Lady Kitty. Let Mrs Clack firſt be admitted. Is the room fit to receive them?

Hetty. Would your Ladyſhip ſee her in the Chamber of Tears?

Lady Kitty. Where elſe? Light the candles, and ſhut out the ſun! [*Exit* Hetty]. This part that I play begins to grow horribly tedious. In my huſband's lifetime, indeed, I had one conſolation at leaſt, that I could always make him pay me in private for the good humour and fondneſs that I laviſhed on him in public: but now, I have no other reſource but in ſervants; and they too at times are rebellious. Theſe Engliſh creatures get ſuch odd notions about liberty into their heads! I fancy the Turks would make good domeſtics enough; but then the brutes are ſo tame and ſubmiſſive, that it is ſcarce poſſible to teaze and torment them: now the great pleaſure of power, is in ruling over ſenſible ſubjects, who wince and feel the yoke when it galls them.—Bleſs me! who is this?—Yes, my lord, in thy tomb all my wiſhes lie bur—

Enter

Enter Hetty.

Hetty. The room is ready, my Lady.

Lady Kitty. I wiſh the room was on fire, and you in the middle on't! plague on you! I was afraid it was the Colonel come back. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Enter Colonel Croſby.

Colonel. THERE is a peculiarity in Miſs Lydell's diſtreſs that I don't quite comprehend; it appears to ariſe from a deeper ſource than Lady Kitty derives it. I wiſh I could ſee her ladyſhip's woman! The girl ſeems to have caught a good deal of the manners of her claſs in this country; curious, arch, and corrupt: with a proper application, there will be no difficulty, I fancy, to get at the family-ſecrets.—Here ſhe comes.

Enter Hetty.

You are in a prodigious hurry, Mrs Hetty! Nothing uncommon has happened, I hope?

Hetty. Uncommon? no, no, Colonel; our affairs generally keep pretty much the ſame train: hurry-ſcurry—ſending—recalling—commanding—forbidding—Lord have mercy upon me! To live here, one ſhould have the art of the Holloway cheeſecake-man, and be in a hundred places at the very ſame time.

Colonel. She ſeems in a right cue for my purpoſe.—You are upon no commiſſion at preſent?

Hetty. Not immediately; but I muſt not be out of the way; for as my lady is deck'd out in her diſmals, perhaps ſhe may take a fancy to faint.

Colonel. Poor lady! Lady Kitty is, indeed, a moſt extraordinary inſtance of the ſincerity and fervour of conjugal love.

Hetty. Yes; I believe there are very few women can match her.

Colonel. And Miſs Lydell ſeems to have caught the infection. How long, pray, has her mother been ſo exceedingly ill?

Hetty.

Hetty. Who's mother?

Colonel. Miſs Lydell's.

Hetty. I never heard a word of her ſickneſs.

Colonel. No! becauſe, my lady was—

Hetty. Yes; as I gueſſed: This is one of her tricks; ſome ſtory ſhe has trump'd up.

Colonel. Indeed!—Oh, Mrs Hetty; though it is not uſual in this country to give vails, I ſuppoſe you know it is the practice to pay ſome little occaſional compliment, for the good offices of thoſe whom the injuſtice of fortune has placed in a ſtation below us.

Hetty. I have always ſaid, for politeneſs, no nation could equal the French.

Colonel. You will permit me to diſcharge this duty in part. [*Gives her money.*

Hetty. One may ſee by your manner, Colonel, where you have paſſed the greateſt part of your time.

Colonel. I don't know any body's approbation I am more ambitious to have.—But, Mrs Hetty, as to Miſs Lydell; there ſeems to be a fixed melancholy hang on her brow.

Hetty. I don't wonder at it.

Colonel. But even now I ſurpriſed her in tears.

Hetty. Like enough. I ſuppoſe ſhe has been under the laſh; my lady has been, as uſual, employing her talents in teazing.

Colonel. Talents in teazing?

Hetty. Yes; it is a little amuſement her ladyſhip takes every morning, juſt by way of exerciſe, between breakfaſt and dinner.

Colonel. Oh, you wrong her ladyſhip: indeed, I never ſaw ſtronger proofs of delicate and tender affection.

Hetty. Ha, ha! how eaſily you men are impoſed on!

Colonel. Nay, but, my dear girl, prithee don't be ſo giddy. To deal ſeriouſly with you, I can't help taking a warm intereſt in what relates to Miſs Lydell.

Hetty. Upon my word, ſhe richly deſerves it.

Colonel. And ſhould be ſorry to find her preſent very alarming diſtreſs owing to any indiſcretion of hers.

Hetty. On that head, you may make yourſelf perfectly eaſy.

Colonel. But how ſhall we be able to account for—

Hetty. In the moſt natural way in the world.

Colonel.

Colonel. Will you be kind enough to lend your aſſiſtance?

Hetty. With all the pleaſure in life. You can be ſecret, I hope.

Colonel. You will find me a man of honour in every reſpect.

Hetty. In one inſtance, you have juſt given me a convincing proof, I confeſs. Why, then, as to this lady of ours; in hypocriſy ſhe would be an over-match for a Methodiſt.

Colonel. Really?

Hetty. And as to cruelty, there never was ſo ingenious, ſo refined a tormentor: the fathers of the Inquiſition themſelves would be proud to receive inſtructions from her. I could give you ſuch a hiſtory—

Colonel. Is it poſſible?

Hetty. This room is too public; beſides, perhaps her ladyſhip may pop in and ſurpriſe us, for ſhe is as ſuſpicious and prying as a cuſtomhouſe officer. Dare you venture yourſelf in my room for a moment?

Colonel. If you are not apprehenſive of danger, I muſt, Miſs Hetty, be a coward indeed, if I—

Hetty. Oh, as to my own part, I know I am ſecure; you are engaged too deeply elſewhere.

Colonel. Me, child?

Hetty. Ha, ha, ha! Lord have mercy! how oddly you look! What, d'ye think I have not found you out before this? Nay, for the matter of that, my lady knows as much as myſelf; and, to tell you the truth, I believe that was the cauſe of the ſcene to which you were partly a witneſs.

Colonel. Nay, but, child—

Hetty. Huſh! ſtep into that room: I muſt introduce Mrs Clack, the mantua-maker, to an audience; after which I'll be with you. [*Exeunt.*

Lady Kitty *diſcovered in deep mourning; the room hung with black; a lamp on the table.*

Lady Kitty. What the deuce keeps this woman ſo long? I grow moſt terribly tired of my attitude; but to this creature I muſt keep up my character: ſhe is an abſolute Gazette, and at her return will publiſh me in every part of the town.

Enter

Enter Hetty *and* Mrs Clack.

Hetty. There you ſee her ladyſhip ſits; abſorb'd in grief, quite abſent; ſhe knows nothing of us.

Clack. Poor dear lady!

Hetty. I will endeavour to rouſe her attention.

Lady Kitty. Gone, loſt, for ever loſt!

Hetty. Pleaſe your Ladyſhip! Madam!

Lady Kitty. Why will you teaze me to ſuſtain a tedious life? I have no reliſh for rich wines, or delicate viands; the bread of affliction is the beſt banquet for me.

Clack. And that is but coarſe food, Heaven knows.

Lady Kitty. Don't I hear ſome other voice in the room? my eyes are grown ſo miſty and dim—

Hetty. With crying!—Mrs Clack, your Ladyſhip's mantua-maker, from England, to pay her duty; and deſires your Ladyſhip's commands for that country.

Lady Kitty. Let her approach.—How d'ye do, Mrs Clack?—Hetty, child, you may go to your dinner.—A good creature; an humble kind of friend, Mrs Clack: to her care and attention I think myſelf deeply indebted; as ſhe will find when they open my will.

Hetty. For Heaven's ſake! your Ladyſhip makes my blood run cold in my veins.

Lady Kitty. D'ye think, Hetty, you ſhall lament me?

Hetty. Can your Ladyſhip doubt it? I ſhould almoſt break my heart, if your Ladyſhip was not to leave me a farthing.

Lady Kitty. Should you? Kind ſoul!—I ſhall try the experiment you hypocritical ſlut!

Hetty. But when our ſuperiors are ſo conſiderate as to think of their menials in their laſt moments, to be ſure it gives poor ſervants greater ſpirits to cry for their loſs.

Lady Kitty. Doubtleſs. You may go. [*Exit* Hetty.] Well, Mrs Clack, you find me vaſtly altered ſince the death of Sir John.

Clack. To be ſure, your Ladyſhip is ſomething changed ſince the day I had the honour to try on your Ladyſhip's cloaths for your Ladyſhip's wedding.

Lady Kitty. True. You, I think, Mrs Clack, decked me out like another Iphigenia, to be ſacrificed at the temple of Hymen. Don't you recollect the tremors, the terrors, that invaded each nerve, on that ſolemn, that awful

awful occaſion? You muſt remember, with what reluctance I was dragged by Sir John to the altar.

Clack. To be ſure, your Ladyſhip ſhewed a becoming coyneſs upon the occaſion. I remember, about the hour of bedding, you hid yourſelf behind the bottle-rack in the beer cellar, to avoid Sir John; if your Ladyſhip had not happened to have coughed, we ſhould not have found you.

Lady Kitty. The conflict was great: but, dear Mrs Clack, what could I do? Troy ſtood a ſiege for only ten years; now ſixteen were fully accompliſhed before I was compelled to ſurrender.

Clack. That was ſtanding out a vaſt while, to be ſure. I recollects, what added to your Ladyſhip's grief was, that the nuptials ſhould happen to fall out in the middle of Lent.

Lady Kitty. Dear Clack, you renew my confuſion: little did I think ever to ſully that ſacred ſeaſon by the celebration of ſuch a feſtivity.

Clack. But there could not be ſo much harm in the matter neither, as marriages, your Ladyſhip knows, are all ſettled above.

Lady Kitty. By that argument I was induced to ſurrender; with, however, an expreſs ſtipulation, that all connubial intercourſe ſhould be ſuſpended Wedneſdays and Fridays.

Clack. That muſt have been a vaſt denial to both parties, no doubt.

Lady Kitty. How, Mrs Clack! you wou'dn't inſinuate that I was prompted to the connection by any—

Clack. Far from it, my Lady! I only meant, that it muſt give your Ladyſhip pain to refuſe Sir John any favour; for, to be ſure, never was any lady half ſo happy in a partner as you.

Lady Kitty. How irreparable muſt then be my loſs! Yes, Clack, he poſſeſs'd my whole heart, and poſſeſſes it ſtill: my waking thoughts are all devoted to him; in ſleep his lov'd image is ever before me—ſtarting from my couch,

"I cry aloud; he hears not what I ſay:
"I ſtretch my empty arms; he glides away!"

Clack. Vaſt mournful indeed! But I ſhould think your Ladyſhip might find out a cure.

Lady Kitty. Which way?

Clack.

Clack. Fill your arms with ſomething ſubſtantial, and I warrant 'twill frighten the phantom.

Lady Kitty. Clack, I don't comprehend—

Clack. I only recommends to your Ladyſhip the proſcription I made uſe on myſelf: there was my firſt huſband, ſweet Mr Snip, though a ſtaymaker, as portly a perſon—I really believes, I ſhould have followed the dear ſoul to his grave, hadn't our foreman, Tom Clack, ſtep'd in to conſole me? indeed, the match was very convenient, as he had done all my huſband's buſineſs during the time of his ſickneſs.

Lady Kitty. I am aſtoniſhed, woman, at your preſumption. Do you recollect to whom you are addreſſing this language?

Clack. I beg pardon: but I thought in theſe matters your Ladyſhip was like the reſt of our ſex; and though Sir John—

Lady Kitty. Peace! nor let your unhallow'd lips profane the dear name! even now, his ſacred ſhade ſeems to upbraid me: ſee there!

Clack. There? where? I ſees nothing, I'm ſure.

Lady Kitty. How awful, how tremendous, he looks! his front furrow'd, for the firſt time, with a frown!

Clack. Lord bleſs me! I wiſh I was well out of the houſe!

Lady Kitty. But, be pacified, dear lord of my life; no ſecond to thee ſhall ſucceed:

" Firſt let the opening earth a paſſage rend,
" And let me thro' the dark abyſs deſcend,
" Before I break the plighted faith I gave!
" Thou hadſt my vows, and ſhalt for ever have;
" For whom I lov'd on earth, I'll worſhip in the grave!"

Clack. Never ſtir, if ſhe ben't talking of poetry! her brain's turn'd, to be ſure.

Lady Kitty. He beckons! lead on my lov'd lord! thy ſummons I with rapture obey. His arms encircle me round; and now together we plunge into the gulph! the raging billows ſurround us! now they riſe o'er our heads! now we ſink, we ſink, in ſilence together! and, oh—[*falling.*] Curſe the chair! how came I to miſs it?

Clack. Mercy upon us! help, for Heaven's ſake help! What, is there nobody left in the houſe?

Enter

Enter Hetty.

Lord, Mrs Hetty, I am glad you are come! My poor Lady! ſhe is quite gone, I am afraid.

Hetty. On the ground! in one of her fits, I ſuppoſe.—No doubt, it is dreadful to you; but we are us'd to 'em every day. Step and call ſome more of the—[*Exit* Clack.] How came your Ladyſhip to fall on the ground?

Lady Kitty. Where the deuce have you been? that old fool was ſo frighted, ſhe never thought of bringing the chair. She has pinch'd me as black as a coal.

Hetty. Would your Ladyſhip pleaſe to recover now, or ſhall I fetch in the hartſhorn?

Lady Kitty. This woman is an idiot; ſo there is no occaſion at preſent.

Hetty. Come back, Mrs Clack; my Lady begins to revive;

Re-enter Mrs Clack.

and upon theſe occaſions ſhe wiſhes to have but few people by. T'other ſide, Mrs Clack. So, ſo, ſo!

Lady Kitty. Am I recall'd to hated life again?

Hetty. Your Ladyſhip has had a violent ſtruggle. Nothing more than uſual, I hope, has happened.

Clack. I believes indeed it was partly my fault: in order to comfort my Lady, I was raſh enough to recommend another huſ—

Lady Kitty. Recal not the deteſted idea, unleſs you wiſh to ſee me ſink again at your feet!

Clack. I beg your Ladyſhip's pardon! I can't think what in the world could poſſeſs me! Indeed, Lord Harry Huntwidow, hearing that I was going over, did deſire me to deliver a letter.

Lady Kitty. To me? preſumptuous man! how dar'd he encourage a hope—Had not he heard that Don Juan de Muſtachio, a Spaniſh grandee of the very firſt claſs, had laid his Golden Fleece at my feet?

Hetty. True enough.

Lady Kitty. Didn't the Palſgrave of Saltſplaſh, a ſovereign prince on the banks of the Rhine, offer to ſhare his power with me? and, after all, to ſubmit to a ſubject!—This Lord Harry, Hetty, is an abſolute beggar: red-

faced, rabbet-back'd, with a pair of legs like a couple of drumſticks.

Hetty. Marry come up, my ſcurvy companion!

Clack. As ſoon as ever I return, I ſhall deliver his lordſhip his letter.

Lady Kitty. Hold, Clack; let it lie on the table.

Clack. Will your Ladyſhip deign then to give it a reading?

Lady Kitty. By no means, Mrs Clack. Put it amongſt the other papers, Hetty, which in a few days are to expire in the flames.

Hetty It ſhall, Madam.

Lady Kitty. A monthly ſacrifice I offer up, Mrs Clack, before the dear image of him I adore.

Hetty. We ſhall have a fine blaze; for this month has been very prolific.—My Lady's illneſs had made me like to forget; your relations, Mrs Clack, grow impatient without.

Lady Kitty. Who are they?

Clack. A ſiſter of mine, and her huſband, to beg your Ladyſhip's intereſt to get their daughter out of a convent.

Lady Kitty. A convent! how got ſhe there?

Clack. Run away from her parents with a paltry 'prentice, to avoid the man of their chuſing; and purtends, on purpoſe to plague 'em, that ſhe wants to be a nun; and, what is worſer, threatens to turn Papiſh if they torment her.

Lady Kitty. Of what uſe can I be?

Clack. If your Ladyſhip could order the child to be deliver'd back to her parents—

Lady Kitty. This is a matter of weight, Mrs Clack, and muſt be conſidered maturely: I am too ill, at preſent, to admit an audience. I ſhall deſire the governor to direct a guard to eſcort your niece to my preſence; we ſhall then ſee what is beſt to be done. Hetty, let the governor know my deſire. But this, Mrs Clack, I muſt tell you; if the girl's converſion is the matter in queſtion, I can on no account interpoſe; the friendſhip I have with the Pope ties my hands where the Holy See is concerned.

Clack. Nothing of that, believe me, my Lady.

Lady Kitty. But don't indulge a ſurmiſe, which was circulated, even at Rome itſelf, with too much ſucceſs, that any thing ſenſual tainted the intercourſe between the reverend Pontiff and me.

Clack.

Clack. Heaven forbid that I ſhould think of any ſuch thing!

Lady Kitty. Malice, join'd with credulity, gave riſe to the fable: ſacred ſentiments, that ſpring in kindred minds, firſt began and cemented the union. Every avenue, but what friendſhip permits, is guarded by thy lov'd image, my lord! thou, who art the alphabet, the begining, the ending, the very Great A and Z, of all my tender affections. [*Exit.*

Clack. Poor lady! ſhe is in a piteous plight; for all the world like Mrs Andromedy, that one ſees at the theatre.

Hetty. Ay, Mrs Clack; to all widows ſhe is indeed a ſhining example.

Clack. True. Why, I myſelf, if my huſband had left me in circumſtances accordingly, ſhould have taken on a great deal more than I did; but folks, who have their living to get, can't afford to cry, you know, as much as your people of faſhion; beſides, every body has not the gift of incontinence, like to my lady.

Hetty. True, true. But you had better ſtep out to your friends, and let them know what meaſures my lady has taken.

Clack. I will, I will; they will be impatient, no doubt. [*Exit.*

Hetty. Colonel, you may appear.

Enter Colonel.

Well, Sir, after what you have ſeen and heard, I ſuppoſe all your doubts are remov'd.

Colonel. Perfectly ſatisfied; a new edition of the Epheſian Matron, with amazing improvements. But poor Miſs Lydell! I own her ſituation diſtreſſes me greatly.

Hetty. The damſel, it is true, is in terrible durance; do you feel yourſelf knight-errant enough to fly to her reſcue?

Colonel. Would the lady, d'ye think, accept of my ſervice?

Hetty. It is but a poor compliment to ſuppoſe that ſhe wou'dn't prefer the ſoft bondage of love, to the galling fetters ſhe wears.

Colonel. Can I then, Mrs Hetty, hope for nothing more than a preference?

Hetty.

Hetty. I don't think myſelf at liberty, Colonel, to tell you all that I know. In the drawing-room you will find the young lady alone: as you gave me a handſome retainer, I have been in court and open'd the cauſe; do you ſpeak to the merits; you are a good pleader, and I make no doubt will ſucceed.

Colonel. I will go and labour hard for a verdict.

Hetty. You will find the court inclined to your ſuit.—But, Colonel, you have no objections, when you have delivered the damſel, to break the chains of her confidante too?

Colonel. The romance would be irregular elſe. [*Exit.*

Hetty. So! her ladyſhip's power draws towards a period; ſhe muſt provide new ſubjects, at leaſt. She ſuppoſed the hopes from her will would ſecure me; but the day is too diſtant; beſides I know her too well to have any reliance—

Enter Servant.

Serv. Bleſs me, Mrs Hetty, what can be the matter? Here is a file of muſqueteers coming into the houſe.

Hetty. The girl, I ſuppoſe, from the convent. A new whim of my lady's: I will go to them; you have nothing to fear. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to another Apartment.*

Enter Mr *and* Mrs Minnikin, *and* Codling.

Mrs Min. Now, ſon Codling, boldly put in your claim, We will ſupport you, I warrant.

Enter Mrs Clack.

Well, ſiſter, what news from my lady?

Clack. Small hopes, I am afraid: the gentlewoman herſelf is in a deſperate taking; but Jenny will be forthcoming, however. I fancy here ſhe is, by the noiſe on the ſtairs.

Enter Lapelle.

Lap. Serviture, Monſieurs and *Meſdames!*—Why, what the deuce is the matter? There is your daughter below, ſurrounded by a troop of *ſoldas*, as the French call them.—Here ſhe is.

Enter

Enter Jenny *and Soldiers.*

Mrs Min. So, Jenny! You ſee what you have brought yourſelf to, to be made a ſhow on in the ſtreets, guarded like a—

Jenny. I am not the firſt, Madam, who has ſuffered for the ſake of religion.

Mrs Min. Religion? Rebellion, you hypocritical ſlut!

Jenny. Can I give a ſtronger proof of my ſincerity, than in quitting a life of affluence and eaſe, to embrace poverty, faſting, and penance?

Min. Not one of the three but thee wouldſt run twenty miles to avoid! No, no, Jenny, that's all a pretence; it is not poverty, but ſomething elſe, you want to embrace.

Lap. Hold, Monſieur Minnikin! You are a little too haſty: *Jeunes filles*, as the French ſay, are not to be treated ſo roughly; ſuffer me to *parle un pew.* Is it true, *Mademoiſelle, mon amy* Codling, becauſe you are *amorew* of ſomebody elſe—

Jenny. My duty, Sir, directs me not to contradict what a father affirms.

Min. Yes, yes, you are plaguy dutiful all of a ſudden!

Clack. Huſh! Here comes my lady; leave the matter to her.

Enter Lady Kitty *and* Hetty.

Lady Kitty. Hetty, order the guards to withdraw.—[*Exeunt Soldiers.*]—Which are the parties? and what their cauſe of complaint?

Min. Why, pleaſe your Ladyſhip, our buſineſs is this: That young ſlut that ſtands there, who, between ourſelves, for all her ſanctified looks—

Lady Kitty. Honeſt friend, you are too familiar and loud.

Lap. Huſh, Matt! and let me open the matter.—Matt Minnikin, my Lady, an honeſt *burgoiſe*, that lives *dans* the *cite*, won't ſet fire to the Thames, though he lives near the Bridge; a nameſake, but no relation to Mr *Mat-Chavel*—

Lady Kitty. You too are pretty forward, I think! And, pray, Sir, who and what may you be?

Lap. Per vous ſervice, as the French ſay, my name is Lapelle; by diſtraction, a Frenchman, though a native of *Londre*; my purdeceſſors were mefugees, and came over after

after the revolution of the edict of Nantz. Don't you think, my Lady, there is a *quelque choſe* in my manner, a ſomething, that ſpeaks me ſprung from the French?

Lady Kitty. Rather more relative in your modeſty, Mr Lapelle.

Lap. Powteter, my Lady.

Lady Kitty. But let this honeſt man tell his own ſtory; he ſeems very able.

Lap. With all my heart; *de tout mon cur*, as the French ſay.—Come, Matthew! *alons!*

Min. Why, I ſay, my Lady, as I was ſaying, that girl there—

Lap. Pardy aſſes ſhenteel; and, for an Engliſh face, a pretty jolly viſage enough.

Lady Kitty. Peace, Sir!

Lap. My Lady, *pardunn!*

Min. Rather, I ſay, than marry this honeſt neighbour of ours, as reputable a tradeſ—

Lap. Ceſt vrai; Monſieur Codling lives in *beaucope de credit.*

Lady Kitty. Nobody called on you as a voucher.

Lap. Aſſurement, my Lady.

Min. She has run away along with our 'prentice; but as we followed pretty cloſe at their heels, not having time to complete their project, ſhe has taken refuge here in a convent; and ſays, moreover, if we perſiſts, ſhe will promiſculouſly turn Papiſh and nun.

Lap. Pour a Papiſh, *powteter*; but *pour la* nun, *pardonnez moi!* my Lady, *que dities vous?*

Lady Kitty. Will nobody ſilence this impertinent jackanapes?—Well, child, you hear what your father alleges.

Jenny. May I crave your Ladyſhip's private ear for a moment?

Lady Kitty. Withdraw; not out of the room.—Well, child, what are the objections to the man your parents have choſen?

Jenny. Two as ſtrong ones as any mortal can have: I hate him, and I love another.

Lady Kitty. Pretty frank, I muſt own.—And as to the change of religion—

Jenny. A mere fetch, to keep out of their hands.

Lady Kitty. You have no hopes that your parents will yield?

Jenny. Mother, perhaps, might comply; but no mule is ſo headſtrong as father.

Lady Kitty. And you, I ſuppoſe, are as determin'd as he?

Jenny. Never once gave up a point in my life.

Lady Kitty. I dare ſay. But, if they were to deſire you to marry the 'prentice—

Jenny. They would find me a dutiful daughter.

Lady Kitty. Then you have no objection to obey their commands, when they happen to contain the very things that you wiſh?

Jenny. Not in the leaſt.

Lady Kitty. And after having produced, and at their own expence trained and ſuſtained you, you would ſtill ſuffer them, I dare ſay, to ſupport and protect you?

Jenny. As in duty they are bound.

Lady Kitty. And they might direct you, provided you govern'd them?

Jenny. In every reſpect.

Lady Kitty. Well ſaid, my little American! you would be an heroine, child, on the other ſide the Atlantic.—Why, in your caſe, Miſs Jenny, I don't ſee what we can do: there is, indeed, one expedient, if you find you have courage enough to perform it.

Jenny. I ſhall not flinch, my Lady, when it comes to the puſh.

Lady Kitty. There are, my dear, two men who ſolicit your hand; one favour'd by you, the other your father approves.

Jenny. My ſituation exactly.

Lady Kitty. Suppoſe then, by way of reconciling all parties, you were to marry 'em both?

Jenny. The happieſt thought in the world! I wonder it never came into my head.—But, I am afraid, my Lady, we have not dignity enough to do ſuch a thing as this without danger.

Lady Kitty. We will conſider of this at our leiſure.—How ſhould you like living with me in this town?

Jenny. Of all things upon earth.

Lady Kitty. We will ſee what can be done. Mr and Mrs Minnikin, I have been ſounding your daughter; a little time and ſome proper perſuaſions, may induce her to comply with your wiſhes.

Mrs Min.

Mrs Min. We are highly indebted to your Ladyſhip's goodneſs!

Lady Kitty. One of my maids of honour is returning to England; I ſhall have no objection to promoting Mrs Clack's niece to the place.

Clack. Brother Minnikin!—We ſhall be bound to pray for your Ladyſhip.

Lady Kitty. Here Lydia comes, and the Colonel cloſe with her!

Enter Colonel *and* Lydia.

Lydia, my dear, though with the greateſt regret, yet the deſign is ſo laudable, I conſent that you may return to your mother; theſe honeſt people, my love, will conduct you with care.

Colonel. My Lydia, Madam, will not want their aſſiſtance.

Lady Kitty. Colonel? I don't underſtand you.

Colonel. That honour I propoſe having myſelf.

Lady Kitty. How, Colonel!—Shall I crave a word? I hope you have no bad deſigns on the girl.

Colonel. None but ſuch as I hope her friends will approve?

Lady Kitty. Is it poſſible you can be in earneſt?

Colonel. What ſhould make your Ladyſhip doubt it?

Lady Kitty. Indeed? Nay, if that be the caſe, it would be criminal in me to conceal a ſecret in which your honour is concerned: thoſe tears, which my humanity made me attribute to her filial fears for her mother, flow'd from a more ignoble ſource.

Colonel. How, Madam!

Lady Kitty. A love, perhaps, for one of my menials. How far it proceeded I ſha'n't take upon me to ſay; but, to avoid ſcandal, I found myſelf obliged to diſcard him.

Colonel. Ha, ha! what a happy invention!

Lady Kitty. I don't underſtand you.

Colonel. Why, to deal with your Ladyſhip plainly, your addreſs is ill employ'd upon me: I own it conſummate; but I have been a conceal'd witneſs to ſome of your arts, and ſhall hardly be impoſed on again. Come, Miſs Lydia; you will take leave of her ladyſhip: her paſt favours may ſoon be acknowledg'd.

Lady Kitty. Is this true, Lydia?

Miſs Lyd.

Miſs Lyd. Your Ladyſhip's approbation, on an event ſo honourable and advantageous for me, I make no doubt of obtaining.

Lady Kitty. Is it poſſible that you can quit my protection and throw yourſelf into the arms of a renegade?

Colonel. How, Madam!

Lady Kitty. Was not your father a rebel?

Colonel. True, Madam.

Lady Kitty. And a'n't you an officer in the ſervice of France?

Colonel. I was, Madam; but my preſent royal maſter, who is above the narrow prejudice of puniſhing the principles of parents in their unfortunate offſpring, has accepted my ſervice, and reſtored my family to the rights of their country. For that ſpot I ſhall embark in the morning; leaving your Ladyſhip to lament the loſs of a ſubject to exerciſe your miſchief and malice upon; which I fancy you will more heavily miſs, notwithſtanding your weeds, than the poor knight who was happy, though even by death, to eſcape from ſo unfeeling a tyrant!

Lady Kitty. Barbarous, inhuman monſter! how dare you recal the memory of the dear—had he lived, thus to ſee me inſulted—but that could not have been: Thou wouldſt never have borne it, my love!—but I am rightly puniſh'd for ſuffering even a thought to be diverted from thee!—Hetty, lead to my cloſet, there to compoſe my ruffled—

Hetty. Pleaſe your Ladyſhip, I muſt beg to be excus'd; I am engaged to take on with Miſs Lydy.

Lady Kitty. Is it ſo? well, well! You will follow me with your niece. You ſee in me, Mrs Clack, another Darius, deſerted at my utmoſt need, by thoſe my former bounty fed. But, what have I to do with mankind? all my wiſhes and wants lie beyond them! I deſire no companion but thee:

"Whilſt on thy form I fix my eager eyes,
"The world I laugh at, and its threats deſpiſe." [*Exit.*

Colonel. The world will be even with your Ladyſhip, or I am greatly miſtaken.—Come, my love, it is time to prepare for our voyage.

Lap. You are bound, Colonel, for *Angleterre*, as the French call it?

Colonel. By the very firſt ſhip.

Lap. I wonder that you, who have reſided ſo long in France, can bear the thoughts of living at London.

Colonel. It is that very circumſtance that will give it an additional reliſh: and believe this, Mr Lapelle, as a truth; no man ever yet deſerted his country, unleſs he had previouſly been by that country deſerted.

Lap. Commong can that be? *permitte moi* to laugh, as they ſay: you ſee how this town is crowded with *Anglois.*

Colonel. Too true, I confeſs; and particularly, Mr Lapelle, by thoſe of your buſineſs; who, at the ſame time that they are exclaiming in every paper againſt the importation of French manufactures, have engroſs'd almoſt the whole of that part of the ſmuggling trade to themſelves. I dare ſay you are at preſent furniſh'd with a pretty good cargo.

Lap. To oblige ſome *my lors,* who are my particular friends, I can't ſay—

Colonel. Nay, be cautious how you truſt me with your ſecrets! there may be ſome danger. Come, Miſs; in this houſe we have nothing further to do.

Miſs Lyd. I can't ſay, but I feel ſome concern for the young victim Lady Kitty has juſt got into her power.

Hetty. You may diſcard your fears about her! unleſs I am miſtaken, they are very properly match'd, and will prove a mutual plague to each other. But, ſhould it be otherwiſe, there ſeems to be a kind of dramatic juſtice in the change of your two ſituations: you, Miſs, are rewarded for your patient ſufferings by the protection of a man of honour and virtue; whilſt ſhe, rebellious to the mild dictates of parental ſway, is ſubjected to the galling yoke of a capricious and whimſical tyrant!

THE

CAPUCHIN;

A COMEDY,

IN

THREE ACTS.

PROLOGUE.

Written by Mr COLMAN.—Spoken by Mr FOOTE.

CRITICS, whene'er I write, in every ſcene
Diſcover meanings that I never mean:
Whatever character I bring to view,
I am the father of the child, 'tis true,
But every babe his chriſt'ning owes to you.
"The comic poet's eye," with humorous air,
Glancing from Watling-ſtreet to Groſvenor-ſquare,
He bodies forth a light ideal train,
And turns to ſhape the phantoms of his brain;
Meanwhile, your fancy takes more partial aim,
"And gives to airy nothing place and name."
A limner once, in want of work, went down
To try his fortune in a country town;
The waggon, loaded with his goods, convey'd
To the ſame ſpot his whole dead ſtock in trade;
Originals, and copies—ready made.
To the new painter all the country came;
Lord, lady, doctor, lawyer, ſquire, and dame,
The humble curate, and the curate's wife,
All aſk a likeneſs—taken from the life.
Behold the canvas on the eaſel ſtand!
A pallet grac'd his thumb, and bruſhes fill'd his hand;
But, ah! the painter's ſkill they little knew,
Nor by what curious rules of art he drew.
The waggon-load unpack'd, his ancient ſtore
Furniſh'd for each a face drawn long before;
God, dame, or hero of the days of yore.
The Cæſars, with a little alteration,
Were turn'd into the mayor and corporation;
To repreſent the rector and the dean,
He added wigs and bands to prince Eugene;
The ladies, blooming all, deriv'd their faces
From Charles the Second's beauties, and the Graces.
Thus done, and circled in a ſplendid frame,
His works adorn'd each room, and ſpread his fame.
The country Men of Taſte admire and ſtare,
"My lady's leer! Sir John's majeſtic air!
"Miſs Dimple's languiſh too! extremely like!
"And in the ſtile and manner of Vandyke!—
"Oh! this new limner's pictures always ſtrike.
"Old, young, fat, lean, dark, fair, or big or little,
"The very man or woman to a tittle!"

Foote

Foote and this limner in ſome points agree;
And thus, good Sirs, you often deal by Me.
When, by the royal licence and protection,
I ſhew my ſmall academy's collection,
The connoiſſeur takes out his glaſs, to pry
Into each picture with a curious eye;
Turns topſy-turvy my whole compoſition,
And makes mere portraits all my exhibition.
From various forms Apelles Venus drew:
So from the million do I copy you.
"But ſtill the copy's ſo exact," you ſay:
Alas! the ſame thing happens every day!
How many a modiſh, well-dreſs'd fop you meet,
Exactly ſuits his ſhape in Monmouth-ſtreet.
In Yorkſhire warehouſes and Cranbourn-alley,
'Tis wonderful how ſhoes and feet will tally!
As honeſt Criſpin underſtands his trade,
On the true human ſcale his laſts are made;
The meaſure of each ſex and age to hit,
And every ſhoe, as if beſpoke, will fit.
My warehouſe, thus, for Nature's walks, ſupplies
Shoes for all ranks, and laſts of every ſize.
Sit ſtill and try 'em, Sirs; I long to pleaſe you:
How well they fit! I hope you find 'em eaſy!
If the ſhoe pinches, ſwear you cannot bear it;
But, if well made, I wiſh you health to wear it!

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He added wigs and bands to prince Eugene;
The ladies, blooming all, deriv'd their faces
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Turns topſy-turvy my whole compoſition,
And makes mere portraits all my exhibition.
From various forms Apelles Venus drew:
So from the million do I copy you.
"But ſtill the copy's ſo exact," you ſay:
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How many a modiſh, well-dreſs'd fop you meet,
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And every ſhoe, as if beſpoke, will fit.
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Shoes for all ranks, and laſts of every ſize.
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How well they fit! I hope you find 'em eaſy!
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But, if well made, I wiſh you health to wear it!

DRAMATIS

PROLOGUE.

Written by Mr COLMAN.—Spoken by Mr FOOTE.

CRITICS, whene'er I write, in every ſcene
Diſcover meanings that I never mean:
Whatever character I bring to view,
I am the father of the child, 'tis true,
But every babe his chriſt'ning owes to you.
"The comic poet's eye," with humorous air,
Glancing from Watling-ſtreet to Groſvenor-ſquare,
He bodies forth a light ideal train,
And turns to ſhape the phantoms of his brain;
Meanwhile, your fancy takes more partial aim,
"And gives to airy nothing place and name."
A limner once, in want of work, went down
To try his fortune in a country town;
The waggon, loaded with his goods, convey'd
To the ſame ſpot his whole dead ſtock in trade;
Originals, and copies—ready made.
To the new painter all the country came;
Lord, lady, doctor, lawyer, ſquire, and dame,
The humble curate, and the curate's wife,
All aſk a likeneſs—taken from the life.
Behold the canvas on the eaſel ſtand!
A pallet grac'd his thumb, and bruſhes fill'd his hand;
But, ah! the painter's ſkill they little knew,
Nor by what curious rules of art he drew.
The waggon-load unpack'd, his ancient ſtore
Furniſh'd for each a face drawn long before;
God, dame, or hero of the days of yore.
The Cæſars, with a little alteration,
Were turn'd into the mayor and corporation;
To repreſent the rector and the dean,
He added wigs and bands to prince Eugene;
The ladies, blooming all, deriv'd their faces
From Charles the Second's beauties, and the Graces.
Thus done, and circled in a ſplendid frame,
His works adorn'd each room, and ſpread his fame.
The country Men of Taſte admire and ſtare,
"My lady's leer! Sir John's majeſtic air!
"Miſs Dimple's languiſh too! extremely like!
"And in the ſtile and manner of Vandyke!—
"Oh! this new limner's pictures always ſtrik
"Old, young, fat, lean, dark, fair, or big
"The very man or woman to a tittle!"

Foote and this limner in ſome points agree;
And thus, good Sirs, you often deal by Me.
When, by the royal licence and protection,
I ſhew my ſmall academy's collection,
The connoiſſeur takes out his glaſs, to pry
Into each picture with a curious eye;
Turns topſy-turvy my whole compoſition,
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DRAMATIS

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Harry Hamper, —	Mr PARSONS.
Doctor Viper, — —	Mr PALMER.
O'Donnovan, — —	Mr FOOTE.
Colonel, — — —	Mr L'ESTRANGE.
Mr Minnikin, — —	Mr EDWIN.
Kit Codling, — —	Mr BANNISTER.
Dick Drugget, — —	Mr R. PALMER.
Tromfort, — —	Mr BADDELEY.
La Jeuneſſe,	
Peter Packthread,	
Kit Cable,	

Mrs Minnikin, — —	Miſs SHERRY.
Mrs Clack, — —	Miſs PLATT.
Jenny Minnikin, — —	Mrs JEWELL.
Abbeſs,	Mrs LOVE.
Nun.	

Poſtillions, Porters, Shoe-blacks, &c.

[In order to avoid ſwelling the bulk of theſe pieces, ſuch paſſages in the *Capuchin* as are exactly ſimilar to thoſe in the *Trip to Calais*, are not reprinted; but the reader is referred to the pages in which the dialogue and fable connect the two dramas.]

ACT

ACT I.

[The firſt variation from the *Trip to Calais* is by the following inſertion, after *Tromſort's* ſpeech, ending, "for he is ver fond of de ſea," page 333.]

Tromf. SOME littel time paſt, ve vas have anoder gentleman of de ſame kind in dis town: he vas a *grand* autere; *diable*, a man of great deal of vit, *beaucoup d'eſprit.*

Jenny. Ay?

Tromf. Oh, *oui!* he vas write de pretty paragraph in de Gazette, vat you call your newſpaper? by gar, he lay about him like *le diable!* Poff, poff, poff! he make all dé my lors, ay, and my ladies too, ſhake in dere two ſhoe.

Dick. What brought him here?

Tromf. He vas come over here vid my Lady Deborah Dripping.

Jenny. Is her ladyſhip here?

Tromf. No; ſhe vas go to Italy to viſit de Pope.

Dick. And leave the doctor behind?

Tromf. You know he vas proteſtant *Pretre*: not but he vas ver polite, and offered to turn Papiſt, to vait on dé lady.

Dick. That was very complaiſant of the doctor. Where is he now?

Tromf. He is gone governeur to ſhew dis country to a chevalier *Anglois*, an Engliſh knight, I dink dey call Sir Harry de Hamper.

[The dialogue then proceeds without any variation to p. 340; where, inſtead of the entrance of *Lapelle*, *Gingham* and *La Jeuneſſe*, the act was continued, and concluded as follows.]

Mrs Min. Bleſs me, what a rumbling is that!

Re-enter Codling.

Codl. I fancy, an old neighbour of yours, that has juſt drove into the yard.

Min. Who can it be?

Codl. Mr Hamper, that kept the great tea-ſhop at the corner of Cornhill; you remember him?

Min.

Min. What ſhould ail me? many a tiff have we taken at Mother Red-Cap's, in our Sunday-nights walks up to Hampſtead.

Mrs Min. Ay, but, Matt, times are altered with him now: ſince the death of his brother, he is become a knight banneret, and perhaps may chuſe to forget his old friends.

Min. Ay, ay, like enough. Upon his coming to his means, he grew too proud to live in the city; ſo ſhut up ſhop, and I ha'n't got ſight of him ſince. Son Codling, doſt know what brought him here?

Clack. Sir Harry Hamper! is he here? I ſhall be happy to ſee him; I had the honour to furniſh him with ſome tom-bore waiſtcoats when he ſet out on his tower.

Min. Tower! what a deuce could provoke him to leave home?

Clack. Wanted to ſee the world, I ſuppoſe.

Min. See the world? what, juſt as he is going out on't?

Clack. And to qualify him for the honour of a young lady of quality's hand, that lives in our ſquare, to whom he paid his addreſſes; but ſhe inſiſts upon his poliſhing a little.

Min. A young lady? what, Harry Hamper? Zounds, why, he is ten years older than I am! on the wrong ſide of ſeventy, I'll be upon oath.

Clack. Ay, that is as you reckon him; but he dates his birth from the day of his ſucceeding to the family honours.

Mrs Min. About five years ago.

Min. He is not far from the mark; once a man, and twice a child!

Codl. To my thinking, theſe Mounſeers have diſfigured him ſtrangely; if it had not been for Peter Packthread, his old ſhopman, whom he keeps as his valet de ſham, I ſhould never have known him.

Min. I reckon he is as proud as Old Nick.

Codl. I can't ſay much as to that. Peter ſays that his maſter has not pick'd up much of their lingo, ſo his ſpeech is pretty much as it was; he talks to every body, runs from one thing to t'other, and rattles away at his old rate, I can tell you.

Mrs Min. But how does he manage to call for ſuch things as he wants?

Codl. He pick'd up a clargyman, as he paſs'd through this

this town, and carried him with him, as his travelling tuterer. Oh, here he is.

Enter Sir Harry Hamper, Peter Packthread, Dr Viper, *and two Poſtillions.*

Sir Harry. Come, come! come along, Doctor! Peter, give the poſtillions thirty ſouſes a-piece.

Peter. 'Tis put down, they are to have but five, in the book.

Sir Harry. No matter; it will let them know we are ſomebody, Peter.

Peter. What ſignifications that? ten to one, we ſhall never ſee them again.

Sir Harry. Do as you are bid! [Peter *pays the Poſt.*

Peter. There! Pox take 'em, ſee how they grin! ay, ay, I dare be ſworn you ha'n't ſeen ſuch a ſum this many a day.

1ſt Poſt. Serviteur! bonne voyage, Monſieur my Lor! [*Exeunt Poſtillions.*

Sir Harry. There, there, Peter! my lord! I have purchaſed a title for ten pence; that is dog-cheap, or the devil's in't!

Peter. Nay, in that reſpect, the folks here make but little difference between their dogs and your Worſhip, I think; for every mangy cur I have met with, is either *prince*, or *my lord*, or *marquis*.

Clack. I am happy to ſee your Honour in France.

Sir Harry. What, Mrs Clack! and Mr Minnikin and wife, as I live! How fares it, my old city friends?

Min. Thank you, thank you, Sir Harry! What, you have been the grand tower, I ſuppoſe.

Sir Harry. Ay, Matt: what's money without manners? I have enough of the firſt, to be ſure; and I wanted to ſee if I could not pick up a little of the laſt.

Clack. And how does your Honour like France?

Sir Harry. Only the firſt ſpot in the world, Mrs Clack: for eating, drinking, laughing, and loving, *vive la France!* hey, Domine?

Mrs Min. Eating! ſure your Honour does not think their wictuals are better than our'n.

Sir Harry. Wictuals! Lord help your roaſt-beef and plumb-pudding ſoul! why, there are no ſuch things in the country.

Min. No! I have heard, indeed, they had not over much plenty; but I didn't think the poor creatures were ſo bad off as that.

Sir Harry. What, becauſe a whole family does not get round a ſir-loin of beef, or a ſaddle of mutton, and devour it like a kennel of hounds! Can there be any thing ſo ſavage, as to eat up ſheep and oxen like a parcel of cannibals: I wonder they don't dreſs them in their fleece and their hides; hey, Domine?

Viper. Doubtleſs, Sir Harry, the French elegance would never be able to digeſt ſuch groſs animal food in its natural form; he therefore is the beſt cook with them who can diſguiſe it the beſt.

Mrs Min. Indeed?

Sir Harry. To be ſure. Why, except a ſide diſh of ſtew'd ſnails, or ſome fricaſeed frogs, I haven't known the name of any thing I have taſted ſince I came over.

Min. Lord have mercy upon us!—And as to love, Sir Harry, I ſhould think that was pretty near over with you.

Sir Harry. Domine, did you ever hear ſuch a block-head!—Why, fool, it was my own fault, or I might have gone into keeping.

Min. Into keeping? you?

Sir Harry. Me! aſk Domine only. What was the name of the ducheſs?

Viper. What ſignifies naming of one? there was not a day, that I didn't receive ſeveral commiſſions of a ſimilar nature.

Mrs Min. Indeed?

Sir Harry. Domine Viper receiv'd the letters, and us'd to read 'em to me in Engliſh.

Viper. They at laſt became ſo exceedingly troubleſome, that I was oblig'd to recommend to Sir Harry the entertaining an opera girl, in order to convince them that they had miſtaken their man; and that ſo far from receiving, we were able to pay.

Sir Harry. And ſo he got me Mademoiſelle Mouche, a ſweet lovely ſyren; and the little rogue was ſo exceſſively fond, Domine Viper thinks ſhe will hardly ſurvive my departure.

Min. Wonderful!

Sir Harry. Fell into 'ſtericks at my going off in the chay;

chay; didn't ſhe? ſo I left Domine to conſole her a little; but you found the way to make her eaſy at laſt.

Viper. A difficult job.

Sir Harry. I had ſome thoughts of carrying her over to England, and taking a box for her at the opera during the ſeaſon; but I thought it might give offence in a certain quarter that you know, Mrs Clack.

Clack. There might have been ſome danger in that.

Sir Harry. Otherwiſe, Mademoiſelle, the Doctor, and I, ſhould have made a ſweet *tete-a-tete* on the road.

Min. I reckon ſhe muſt a' coſt you a power of money.

Sir Harry. Coſt? that's always uppermoſt in a citizen's mouth: not a farthing, you fool! I am ſure, ſhe would have quitted me, if I had but made her the offer. Domine!

Viper. Oh! mere paſſion; not an idea of intereſt.

Sir Harry. Domine heard, indeed, by accident, ſhe had contracted ſome debts to ſupport her relations, for ſhe is the beſt creature on earth; and wanted vaſtly to have a ſmall ſervice of plate and ſome ear-rings.

Mrs Min. Which you gave her, I reckon?

Sir Harry. Not I: I was oblig'd to get Domine to manage the buſineſs. Had ſhe had the leaſt ſuſpicion of me, there would have been the devil to pay; we ſhould have all been off in an inſtant.

Mrs Min. The Doctor has, I find, been very uſeful to you, Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. Could have done nothing without him: not a week ago, he got me out of a deviliſh ſcrape.

Min. How?

Sir Harry. Got to picquet with a count, a great man of the Doctor's acquaintance; I can't ſay I know much of the game; but what of that? one wou'dn't appear ignorant amongſt the French, you know, for the honour of England.

Clack. Oh fy! by no means.

Sir Harry. Egod, the count gave me a trimming; loſt a deviliſh deal more than I had in the country; but Domine made it up for me, among his acquaintance, upon my only giving my note.

Mrs Min. All one as if you had been in London?

Sir Harry. The very ſame thing.

Clack. And pray, your Honour, what news is ſtirring in France?

Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. *Toujours* gay, as they ſay, Mrs Clack.

Clack. I reckon there be powers of our country folks there.

Sir Harry. I ſuppoſe ſo; for I ſaw a good many aukward people, as they ſay, *a la bowlivards*, and at the Coloſſus; but I choſe to avoid them.

Min. Why ſo? I ſhould have been ready to leap out of my ſkin at the ſight of a countryman in foreign parts.

Sir Harry. Like enough, Matthew: but you are a *burgois*, as you know; but the Doctor ſays, that *un humm de quality*, when he voyages, ought to ſhun *les Anglois*.

Clack. I hope you left the royal family all in good health.

Sir Harry. Yes; Mr *le Roi*, as the French ſay, looked pretty jolly and well; I ſaw him in one of the glaſs-caſes at church, and was afterwards at his grand *couvert*, as they call it; his majeſty looked at me very hard: Dominie thinks he was ſtruck with my figure.

Viper. I overheard him whiſper as much to the Duke de Tremouille.

Clack. How long was your Honour coming from Paris?

Sir Harry. Two days and a night.

Clack. Are the accommodations good on the road?

Sir Harry. Their *chevauxes*, their horſes, as the French call 'em, arn't quite ſo nimble as our'n; but then, to make amends, like the French, I *cowrir* the poſt without ſtopping; unleſs, indeed, to take a ſlight *repas* of *jambunn* or a *hamlet*.

Clack. The country's vaſt pleaſant, I reckon.

Sir Harry. La-la: their country folks, their *pheaſants*, as the French call 'em, don't ſeem quite ſo tidy as our'n: but they don't look upon them there creatures in France; mere hogs, *cowſhons*, as they ſay.

Mrs Min. Why, ſure they be Chriſtians, as well as—

Sir Harry. Chriſtians? why, ſo may all the world, if they like it; but it a'n't in every body's power to be a gentleman born: hey, Domine Viper?

Viper. True, true, Sir Harry. The laws of ſubordination are too much neglected in England; all is mere anarchy there; it muſt be owned, France is the only ſpot for a gentleman.

Sir Harry. True. Why, a gentleman born may kill a common fellow in Paris, for leſs money than it would coſt

coſt an unqualified man in England to ſhoot a hare or a partridge.

Viper. Right, Baronet: poor rogues are ſo plenty in Paris, there is no danger of deſtroying the game.

Sir Harry. Well ſaid, Domine Viper!—But, Madam Clack, what makes all your family here? Like me, come over to be poliſh'd, I reckon.

Min. Not we; we be contented, Sir Harry, to rub on in our ruſt. You remember our daughter Jenny?

Sir Harry. Vaſtly well; and ſhe promis'd to turn out a deviliſh fine girl!

Min. Pretty well, as to that.

Sir Harry. What, I ſuppoſe you have brought her here, juſt to faſhion her; give her the *gout.*

Min. No, no; 'tis a freak of her own: run away with our 'prentice, to avoid neighbour Codling.

Sir Harry. A girl of ſpirit, however!

Enter La Jeuneſſe.

La Jeu. Monſieur, on a ſervie.

Sir Harry. What does he ſay, Domine Viper?

Viper. The dinner's on the table, Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. Oh, oh!—Domine! it wou'd'nt be decent, as them there people are but tradesfolks, you know, to aſk them to dinner?

Viper. Why, yes, you may venture, Sir Harry: it is not minded in London; and this town is little better than an Engliſh colony.

Sir Harry. True, true.—Come, good people; as we are all country folks, ſuppoſe we ſit down to table together!

Min. By all manner of means.

Sir Harry. Domine, you will eſcort Mrs Minnikin? Mrs Clack, will you accept of my *braſs?* [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

[The ſame in the *Trip to Calais*, to p. 352, where *O'Donovan's* ſpeech was altered, and the ſcene finiſhed in the following manner.]

O'Don. So now, as I was a-telling, if you can get any friend to ſpeak to the governor, why, if they take it into their heads to reſtore her to you, you may chance to have your daughter again.

Min. True, reverend Sir. But, before we trouble any body, we will firſt try what we can do at the convent ourſelves.

O'Don. By all mains. And, d'ye hear, you need not mention any thing about the purſe; you underſtand me?

Clack. Your Reverence need not fear us.

O'Don. Nay, it is upon account of yourſelves that I ſpeak; becaaſe one's charity ſhould be private, you know; therefore, to make publication would take away moſt of the merit. If you fail, I will ſtep to the convent, and ſee what can be done.

Mrs Min. Very kind, reverend Sir. Then, we will go after the girl to the convent directly.

Clack. But take care what you ſay! you ſee what a hobble we had like to have got into.

Mrs Min. Never fear; I know how to behave myſelf. [*Exeunt.*

O'Don. It was an odd freak of St Francis to forbid us touching of money; unleſs, indeed, his firſt followers were a parcel of pickpockets, and he thought of this method to break them. But, however, as the heretics are gone, and there is no danger of giving offince, by St Francis's lave I will examine the contents of this purſe. Stay! who have we here? [*Draws back.*

Enter Viper.

Viper. The wind is veering, and when it comes fair, my old knight within will be for hying homewards by the very firſt ſhip. Let me ſee: can I hit on no ſcheme to give him one little ſqueeze more? To be ſure, what with tailors, *traiteurs*, toymen, the girl, and the gaming-table, my trip to

to Paris has turn'd out pretty well. One ſmart parting blow I ſhould be glad to—

O'Don. Save you, good Sir!

Viper. Damn theſe bare-footed beggars! a ſet of lazy, lubberly—You may as well ſhift your ground, father; you will get nothing from me.

O'Don. Be it ever ſo little! we have nothing but the benevolence of good Chriſtian peo—Hey! ſure it can't be! by my ſhoul, but it is!—What, Doctor Viper! who expected to ſee you at Calais?

Viper. Pray, honeſt friend, when did our acquaintance commence?

O'Don. It is not a very long ſtanding. Come, do ſhake your memory a bit, Doctor, and you will ſoon recollect me.

Viper. It will be to no purpoſe.

O'Don. I warrant. Surely, my dear, when you were the doer of the Scandalous Chronicle, was not I death-hunter to the very ſame paper?

Viper. Hey! why, you can't be Phelim O'Flam!

O'Don. Not now; but I was about twilve months ago.

Viper. What could induce you to turn capuchin?

O'Don. A few murders.

Viper. Murders!

O'Don. Yes; in order to pay off my lodging, I kill'd a couple of dozen of people, that happen'd to be alive and in good health; ſo the printer would employ me no longer.

Viper. I told you, O'Flam, what would happen; why, you became a perfect Drawcanſir; put more people to death than any three phyſicians in London.

O'Don. What then, Doctor Viper? ſure, your poiſonous pen did more miſchief than me: my dead men walk'd about afterwards, and did their buſineſs as if nothing had happen'd; whilſt the ſtabs made on peoples good names, by your rancour and malice, will admit of no conſolation.

Viper. How is this?

O'Don. In ſhort, my dear Doctor, the only difference between us is this; my dead men are all alive, and your live men had much better be dead.

Viper. Do you know, Sirrah, to whom you are ſpeaking?

O'Don. You may ſay that; from the top to the bottom, every chink and cranny, my dear.

Viper. Pay then proper reſpect to my cloth.

O'Don.

O'Don. What, d'ye mane it is a prieſt that you are?

Viper. Without doubt.

O'Don. Then, upon my ſhoul, it muſt be of your own ordination, like Mr Melchizedeck. A prieſt? I'll wager my frock againſt the price of a maſs, that you can't tell how many the thirty-nine articles are.

Viper. An impudent, audacious—

O'Don. A prieſt? What, becaaſe you was pariſh-clerk to the Moravian meeting-houſe in the Old-Jewry, and us'd to ſnuffle out their bawdy hymns to the tune of beaſtly ballads and jiggs? from thence you got expell'd for robbing the poors box—

Viper. Me?

O'Don. Then you became advertiſement-ſticker to lottery-offices, auctioneers, ſtage-coaches, and mountebank-doctors; but being detected in ſelling the bills for waſte paper to grocers, you got your diſmiſſal, you know—

Viper. Raſcal! I know?

O'Don. After that you turn'd ſwindler, and got out of gaol by an act for the relief of inſolvent debtors.

Viper. Many honeſt men have been in the ſame ſituation.

O'Don. Lave honeſty out, if you plaaſe. Then you became doer of the Scandalous Chronicle; mow'd down reputations like muck; puſh'd yourſelf into the pay of Lady Deborah Dripping, produced anonymous paragraphs againſt her of your own compoſition, and got pay'd by her for not putting them into your paper.

Viper. Where the devil could the fellow collect all this ſtory?

O'Don. Now from here, I ſuppoſe, you will ſoon return home as a fugitive, and pay your old debts by a new act of parliament.

Viper. Well but, Mr O'Flam—

O'Don. O'Donnovan, if you plaaſe. So you ſee, Doctor Viper, you are pretty well known; and all your friends and acquaintance ſhall ſoon know you as well as me in this town.

Viper. The devil! well, but, my dear friend, what can be the meaning of this? why ſhould we two quarrel?

O'Don. Whoſe fault was it, Doctor, I pray?

Viper. Fault? nobody's fault: I was a little forgetful; that is all. What! we have been connected before; and why

why ſhou'dn't we now? ours is a natural alliance; we are poor dogs, and rich men are our game.

O'Don. For the matter of that, I have no objection to hunting in couples.

Viper. That is right. Come, let us in, and drown all animoſity in a bottle of Burgundy.

O'Don. I will wait upon you at night; but I have a little bit of buſineſs at preſent.

Viper. Of what kind?

O'Don. To get a girl out of a convent, and reſtore her to her friends and relations.

Viper. A girl?

O'Don. Ay, the daughter of them there Engliſh within.

Viper. Is the girl handſome?

O'Don. I don't know that, but ſhe's young.

Viper. That will go a good way. And fled from her friends?

O'Don. With a lover, they ſay.

Viper. Gad, a thought has juſt popp'd into my head, that, I fancy, will yield us both a good deal of profit.

O'Don. Of what kind?

Viper. I will inform you within. But where were you bound?

O'Don. To the convent.

Viper. Suſpend your viſit a while. Come with me; I muſt introduce you to a friend of mine in the houſe. But, I hope this greaſy garb has not tainted your mind with any coyneſs or qualms.

O'Don. Not a bit; it is a convanient dreſs when one can't get any other: it ſuits well with the cold of a winter diſtreſs; but when the ſun and ſummer of plenty returns, I ſhall ſhed my coat like a colt.

"When the devil was ill, the devil a monk would be;
"When the devil was well, the devil a monk was he."

[*Exeunt.*

[The ſcenes at the convent ſucceeded, as in the *Trip to Calais;* and the act ended with no other variation than the following ſmall alteration in *Mrs Clack's* ſpeech, p. 357. The third act was all new.]

Clack. True, ſiſter. But come; let us go to *the governor,* as the friar adviſed us, perhaps *he* may put us in a way.

ACT III.

O'Donnovan, Sir Harry Hamper, *and* Viper, *at a table with wine and glaſſes.*

Viper. WHAT, then, you know her, Sir Harry?

Sir Harry. From a child; and a ſweet little roſe-bud ſhe was! by this time, ſhe is in full bloom, no doubt.

Viper. You ſeem to expreſs yourſelf with ſome ardour and warmth, as if you felt a fancy for this fine delicate flower.

Sir Harry. Pho, pho! what chance have I to get the poſſeſſion?

Viper. I don't know that; a little contrivance, and the help of a friend, have brought more unlikely matters to bear.

Sir Harry. Why, Domine, if you would lend your aſſiſtance, there might be ſome hopes, I confeſs.

Viper. Of me, Sir Harry, you are always ſecure: but in my old friend here, you will find a more able aſſiſtant.

O'Don. You are plaaſed to compliment, dear Doctor Viper. Unleſs you are greatly fallen off, for turning bachelors into huſbands, huſbands into cuckolds, and maids into miſtreſſes, there was not a better practitioner within the bills of mortality.

Viper. My dear monk, a truce to your compliments.

O'Don. Oh, the divil a bit of a compliment!

Viper. Well, well, you are always too kind to your friends: but, upon this occaſion, your knowledge of this country—

O'Don. That, indade—

Viper. And, above all, the virtues of that frock, will ſtand us in excellent ſtead.

O'Don. Why, to ſay truth, I know but little elſe it is good for.

Viper. Well, ſhall we have its aſſiſtance?

O'Don. You may ſay that.

Viper. If this ſcheme ſucceeds, Knight, it will do you immortal honour in England; your intrigue at Paris was a fine preparation.

Sir Harry. Do you think that is generally known?

Viper.

Viper. In the mouth of every mortal.

Sir Harry. Ay? that is lucky indeed! But how ſhall we bring this buſineſs about?

Viper. Nothing ſo eaſy. Flam is, you know, deſired by the family, if they can't ſucceed themſelves, to get the girl out of the convent.

Sir Harry. True.

Viper. That deſign is a ſufficient pretence for viſiting the girl.

Sir Harry. Can't be a better.

Viper. As there is little probability that he ſhould prevail with Miſs to return to her father and mother, let him pretend to have had an interview with the young fellow her favourite who lies concealed in the town.

Sir Harry. Well?

Viper. That, moved to compaſſion by their tender attachment, he is determined to lend his aid to accompliſh his wiſhes.

O'Don. By this mains, a little ſpill will be gained from that quarter too [*aſide.*]—Has ſhe the ſhiners, d'ye think?

Viper. I warrant ſhe is not come here unprovided.—That he is ready to conduct her where her lover lies hid, and lend his miniſtry to finiſh his buſineſs.

O'Don. I am but a lay-brother, you know.

Viper. Nor I neither: but, for all that, I wouldn't ſcruple to tack together twenty couple a-day.

Sir Harry. I don't doubt it.

O'Don. That, to be ſure, is an anwſer.

Sir Harry. But how does all this concern me?

Viper. I was coming to that. When the monk has got poſſeſſion of Miſs, what prevents him from bringing the girl to my lodging? where, inſtead of her ſwain, ſhe will be agreeably ſurpriſed to encounter Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. It is a very fine plot, to be ſure: but, Domine, ſuppoſe the young thing ſhould be ſkittiſh, and not quite approve of the change?

Viper. We muſt leave you to ſettle that buſineſs; but, from your dreſs and addreſs—

O'Don. In trot, ſhe muſt be more than woman, to refuſe ſuch a figure.

Viper. A few preſents in hand, and vaſt promiſes upon returning to England—

Sir Harry. And you think ſhe will comply?

O'Don.

O'Don. Oh, never faar; ſhe will melt in a moment.

Viper. Beſides, at worſt, Flam and I ſhall be near you; and if a little compulſion ſhould be required—

O'Don. Is it a rape that you main? upon my ſhoul, Doctor Viper, you are after ſtepping before me a good daal in miſchief.

Viper. A rape! no, no; nothing like it, dear Flam; only a little compulſion, to give the lady an apology for following her own inclinations. Hey, Sir Harry! what are your ſentiments upon the occaſion?

Sir Harry. Should like it of all things in the world! I am quite agog till I—How pretty it will be, to ſee the poor thing pout, and ſnivel, and ſob, and pat me, and cry I warrant, "Go, you naughty thing!"—But is not there ſome danger? won't their magiſtrates, their policy, as they call it here, take it amiſs?

Viper. Oh, no; a gentleman here does whatever he pleaſes: beſides, it is but a ſtep croſs the Channel, and there, you know, we are ſafe.

Sir Harry. True, true.

Viper. And, upon ſecond thoughts, let things turn out as they will, I think it will be right, at your time of life, to report it a rape; it will do your vivacity and vigour a good deal of credit.

Sir Harry. Will it?

Viper. To be ſure. A rape, and upon a nun too, for ſo we muſt call her; it will ſhew a noble contempt for decency, religion, and virtue, and can't fail recommending you to all people of ſpirit.

Sir Harry. I ſhould think ſo: how one improves by one's travels! Why, this would never have come into my head had I ſtay'd in the city.

Viper. Oh, fy! never; that air is too foggy.

Sir Harry. I uſed to be a little factious now and then; but that! Lord, that's nothing at all!

Viper. Oh, no merit in that; the natural conſequence of your food and your fuel.

Sir Harry. But you will take care to paragraph me well in the papers; for if it ſhould not be known, why—

Viper. The main point will be loſt. Never fear! in my old paper, I ſtill keep a place open: that no time may be loſt, I will ſend it to-night.

Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. I can't help laughing, to think how my old friends, in Portſoken and Dowgate, will ſtare when they comes to the article.

Viper. Ready to burſt with envy, I warrant! Well, O'Flam, you know your part; ſet off as ſoon as you pleaſe.

O'Don. Upon my ſhoul, Doctor Viper, there are a few ſcruples and qualms that begin to riſe in my ſtomach.

Viper. Zounds, man, gulp 'em down then as faſt as you can!

O'Don. Upon my conſcience, they won't go; they ſtick ſtill in my troat.

Viper. Hark'ee, Flam! Would not a little *aurum potabile*, a ſmall decoction of guineas, remove the obſtruction?

O'Don. Why, to daal freely, Doctor, I look upon it there is ſome ſmall danger in what we are about. Now, as to you two, you are but birds of paſſage, you know; and being well winged, can take your flight whenever you plaaſe.

Viper. Well?

O'Don. Now, as to myſelf, though I am at home here, yet for all that I am but a ſtranger; and being, beſides, as bare as a board, it is but raaſonable that Sir Harry ſhould ſpare me ſome of his feathers, that may, in caſe of need, carry me out of gun-ſhot, you know.

Sir Harry. By all manner of means.

Viper. But how ſhall we manage it? The rules of your order are ſo very ſevere as to money! I believe I had better receive it; and, if you ſhould want—

O'Don. No, no, Doctor; you are a good caſuiſt, and have ſilenced moſt of my ſcruples: beſides, at confeſſion to-morrow, it is but lumping in this with my other tranſgreſſions.

Viper. Sir Harry?

Sir Harry. Oh, by all manner of means; here!

Viper. Throw it into his cowl.

O'Don. No, no; I can concaal it very well in my ſleeve. —He might have knocked againſt the other, perhaps; and that would not have been altogether ſo dacent.

Viper. Well, well; all obſtacles being removed, diſpatch, my dear Flam, as ſoon as you can.

O'Don. I ſha'n't neglect them. I muſt go to veſpers.— But, Doctor Viper, as you are a conſcientious man, and

one of the cloth, don't you think it would be right to have a few prayers put up, for certain perſons, who have in agitation ſome important affairs?

Viper. Why, it mayn't be amiſs.

O'Don. The community, you know, is always conſidered upon theſe occaſions.

Viper. Oh, I dare ſay Sir Harry won't ſcruple.

Sir Harry. Not in the leaſt. But, to ſay truth, the reverend father has drawn me dry for the preſent.

Viper. Oh, you may be ſoon ſupplied in the houſe.—Come, I will advance: here, here!

O'Don. And in paſſing by the trunk for the poor, if I was to drop in ſomething handſome, you know it might draw down a bleſſing upon our deſign.

Sir Harry. Domine, give him the whole purſe!

O'Don. I ſhall have great pleaſure in ſarving ſo pious a man. Save you, gentlemen! [*Exit.*

Sir Harry. A ſhrewd ſenſible fellow this O'Flam, let me tell you.

Viper. Yes, yes; he knows what he's about.

Sir Harry. But, Domine, after the buſineſs is finiſh'd, how ſhall we diſpoſe of the girl?

Viper. Reſtore her to her friends, and make it a merit.

Sir Harry. But if ſhe ſhould turn out coy, and complain of ill uſage?

Viper. We muſt impute it to ſpite, as by your means ſhe is deprived of her lover.

Sir Harry. That, indeed—But will they believe it?

Viper. Believe it! Flam and I will ſwear to the fact.

Sir Harry. That indeed—But who have we here?

Enter Mr *and* Mrs Minnikin *and* Mrs Clack.

Oh, Mrs Clack! what ſucceſs have you had?

Clack. Came away juſt as we went; the young jade whines about faſting and penance like a Methodiſt teacher, and talks of embracing poverty, as if ſhe was a peer of the realm.

Min. She poverty? 'tis all a pretence! it is ſomebody elſe ſhe wants to embrace.

Sir Harry. Why, Domine and I have been laying our noddles together.

Clack. Your Worſhip is wonderfully kind!

Viper.

Viper. Sir Harry has employed a prieſt here in this town; perhaps you have ſeen him?

Mrs Min. D'ye mean his reverence with the long beard?

Viper. The ſame. The friar is juſt diſpatch'd to the convent; and as the great point is to get the girl out of their clutches, he is to perſuade her that ſhe is to be conducted directly to Drugget.

Mrs Min. But, inſtead of that, he is to bring her to us?

Viper. No, no; that would be too abrupt! to Sir Harry Hamper; who, as a friend to the family, will teach her her duty, and what ſhe owes to her friends.

Clack. That will be very kind in his honour.

Sir Harry. I ſhall ſpare no means, Mrs Clack, to make her ſubmit.

Mrs Min. But I hope his honour won't puſh things to extremities; for you know, Matthew, ſhe ſtill is our child.

Min. Extremities! Sir Harry has undertaken a more difficult taſk than he is aware of: the young ſlut is ſo headſtrong and fractious, that my old friend will find it out of his power, if ſhe continues obſtinate, to make her comply.

Sir Harry. Well, well; it is put trying, however.

Viper. You will take care to be in the houſe if we ſhould want you. Come, Sir Harry, we muſt hie home to wait for the monk. [*Exeunt* Sir Harry *and* Viper.

Clack. Come, good folks, who can tell but his honour may compaſs this job?

Min. I can't ſay I have any great expectations. My old friend, when he liv'd amongſt us, was never over-famous for his powers of perſuaſion; and I can hardly think that age has improv'd his abilities. [*Exeunt.*

The Street.

Enter Dick Drugget.

Dick. It is impoſſible for me to quit this town, and leave my deareſt Jenny behind me; there my heart's treaſure lies hid, and there, ſpite of myſelf, I am carried by an irreſiſtible impulſe. To ſee her, I ſuppoſe, is impoſſible; and equally difficult to give or receive any intelligence.—Huſh! I muſt hide.—Hey! no, ſure! yes; it is Jenny herſelf! but who the deuce can it be that conducts her?

Enter

Enter O'Donnovan *and* Jenny.

O'Don. The houſe is hard-by, at the other end of the town; and ſtands alone, between the inn and the ſnuff-ſhop.

Jenny. Your goodneſs, my dear father, to a poor unfortunate victim, I want words to acknowledge. Your ſelf-denial and mortified ſtate place you above the reach of any pecuniary—

O'Don. My ſweet pretty cratur! in acts of charity, indade, to folks poorer than we are, if any ſuch can be found, we are always plaas'd to convey any donations.

Jenny. I ſhall think myſelf happy to aſſiſt ſo pious a purpoſe [*feels for her purſe.*]—Bleſs me! is not that my dear Dicky, who ſtands there at the corner?

O'Don. Dear Dicky! who the divil is he?

Jenny. The very youth to whom you were going to convey me.

O'Don. Pho, pho! how can that be? becauſe why, I left him at home; and how can he be in two places at once? unleſs, indade, he had wings.

Jenny. His impatience, I ſuppoſe, made him follow you hither.

O'Don. Pox take his impatience! But I tell you, Miſs, it can't be; becauſe why, I never ſaw that parſon before.

Jenny. But I have, and therefore can't doubt: I muſt run to him, father; for I know it is he.

O'Don. Is it? Then my beſt way is to run from him as faſt as I can. [*Exit.*

Jenny. Dicky!

Dick. My deareſt Jenny! this is an unexpected pleaſure indeed. But who was that with you?

Jenny. The honeſt father you ſent to conduct me.

Dick. Me? I have neither ſeen nor ſpoke to a ſoul.

Jenny. No!

Dick. No. This is ſome plot of your parents to get you into their clutches.

Jenny. Perhaps ſo. But where can we go? have you ſecur'd no retreat?

Dick. How could I, my love? as I hadn't the ſmalleſt hopes of—But here comes the prieſt again, and ſomebody with him; let us turn down this ſtreet, and avoid him.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter

Enter O'Donnovan *and* Viper.

O'Don. There, there they go!

Viper. I ſee, I ſee. A fine girl, as I live! too nice a tid-bit for an apprentice, or my muſty old knight: I'll try if I can't ſecure her myſelf.—O'Flam! you know Bet Bonnet, the milliner's girl, that lived with me in London?

O'Don. You may ſay that.

Viper. When I went with the knight, I left her in my lodgings in town; ſtep to her this inſtant.

O'Don. Well?

Viper. Explain to her the buſineſs of Hamper, convey her to him as Minnikin's daughter; ſhe knows well enough how to aſſume the airs of a novice.—But there is hardly time to inſtruct her. Ten to one, too, this blockhead will make ſome damn'd blunder or other.—O'Flam!

O'Don. Well?

Viper. Upon ſecond thoughts, you had beſt undertake this buſineſs yourſelf.

O'Don. What d'ye main?

Viper. Paſs yourſelf on the knight as the party.

O'Don. What, me, for old Minnikin's daughter?

Viper. Ay.

O'Don. Oh, lave off! I ſhall be aaſily taken for a lovely laſs, to be ſure.

Viper. Why not? he muſt be in the dark, to execute his own intentions, you know.

O'Don. That is true. But how ſhall I hide my voice? he may ſee that, you know, without the help of a candle; beſides, I am told I have a ſmall twiſt in my tongue.

Viper. Oh, as to that, Hamper is no critic in dialects; beſides, ſay little, and ſoften your tones as much as you can.

O'Don. But if he ſhould turn out too familiar, what will I do then, Doctor Viper?

Viper. It will be eaſy enough to repel any violence from a man of his age. Beſides, I will think of ſome expedient to bring you ſpeedy relief.

O'Don. Well, well! upon my ſhoul, after all, there is a good daal of fun in the fancy.

Viper. You are to take him for Drugget, you know.

O'Don. No bad match for my linſey-woolſey.

Viper. Oh, a truce to your wit now, and diſpatch, I beſeech you.

O'Don. I go, I go. [*Exit.*

Viper. They are either houſed, or muſt return back again; this is no thoroughfare. Oh, here they come.

Enter Dick *and* Jenny.

I am glad I have met with you. Come, come! I hav'n't a moment to loſe.

Jenny and Dick. Sir!

Viper. That raſcally prieſt is gone for the guard; you will have a file of muſqueteers here in a minute.

Dick. What have I done?

Viper. Done! don't you know, that to ſteal a girl from a convent in this country is a capital crime?

Dick. Sir, as I hope for mercy, I am innocent!

Viper. Innocent! beſides, a prieſt to accuſe you! won't they find you together? is not that proof enough of your guilt? In a word, I know your whole ſtory; I pity, and and am ready to ſerve you.

Jenny. Good Sir, what can we do?

Viper. You hav'n't a moment to loſe: run to the port, throw yourſelf into the firſt veſſel you ſee, and make for England as faſt as you can.

Dick. And what muſt become of Miſs Jenny?

Viper. Leave her to my care; I am well known in this town, and can conceal her with eaſe.

Jenny. But, Sir, how—who—

Viper. Oh, child, be under no apprehenſions; my motive is ſolely compaſſion: beſides, my cloth is a ſufficient ſecurity.

Dick. Cloth? perhaps the gentleman is a clargym—

Viper. Huſh! that muſt not be known where we are.

Jenny. On that ſacred character I can ſafely rely.

Viper. We loſe time! a truce to your regrets, and your raptures; I will ſoon bring you together, I warrant.—That way leads to the quay. Come, Miſs; it is but a ſtep to my houſe.

Jenny. This wonderful eſcape I owe to your goodneſs.

Viper. I could do no leſs, as a Chriſtian. [*Exeunt.*

A Chamber darkened.

Sir Harry Hamper *alone.*

Sir Harry. Miſs will ſoon be here, I ſuppoſe. Well, after all, for improving the mind, and removing fooliſh prejudices, there is no country like France: no wonder our young folks of faſhion turn out ſuch fine fellows, ecod!—Here ſhe is, I believe. No.—A lad who comes over here at nineteen or twenty, may well pick up all the pretty accompliſhments, when I, at ſeventy, in leſs than three months, have learnt to game, whore, deſpiſe my own country, laugh at religion, and, as far as inclination will go, am ripe and ready for any frolic or fun. Well ſaid, old Harry! After all this, my young miſtreſs in London can't refuſe me, I think; the devil's in her, if I hav'n't done enough to convince her that I have ſcoured off all the ſneaking ſniveling cit, and am as profligate as if I had been born a—Huſh! the door opens.

Enter O'Donnovan.

O'Don. Sir Harry!

Sir Harry. Well?

O'Don. Are you ſure you are there?

Sir Harry. Without doubt.

O'Don. And alone?

Sir Harry. Yes.

O'Don. And no light?

Sir Harry. Don't you ſee?

O'Don. I didn't know but you might have a candle concaaled.

Sir Harry. Where? in my pocket?

O'Don. Come, Miſs, you may enter. [*Exit.*

Jenny. [*within.*] Hands off, you rude ruffian!

Sir Harry. What the deuce noiſe are they making?

Jenny. What, are they all dead in the houſe? no creature to lend me aſſiſtance?

Sir Harry. What can this mean?

Jenny. Or have you all conſpired to betray me? For Heaven's ſake, ſome Chriſtian body—

Mrs Min. [*within.*] It is my daughter's voice. Here, houſe!

Min.

Min. Your villainous attack on my daughter gives me a right; and before we part I will know.

Viper. Will you? Then aſk it of thoſe that will tell you.

Min. What, can nobody—

Clack. Perhaps his reverence here may; for he ſeems to know moſt of the folks in the town.

O'Don. Me? I know nobody out of the convent.—I belaave I had better ſhaar off; for perhaps by and bye they may take it into their heads to make ſome enquiries after me of myſelf; and, for the preſent, it will be more convanient to drop the acquaintance. [*Exit.*

Min. But, what the deuce, can nobody give us an account who he is? Where's landlord?

Colonel. You ſeem all ſtrangers to this honeſt gentleman.

Min. Oh, this perhaps is ſomebody who belongs to the town. Why, Sir, if you could give us ſome information—

Colonel. Nay, I can't boaſt the honour of his acquaintance, nor, from the account of his countrymen, ſhould I be very ambitious to make it.

Min. Ay, like enough; and pray, Sir, who—

Colonel. The various particulars of his hiſtory would be rather too tedious at preſent: thus far I may venture to ſay; his reſidence here is not a mere matter of choice.

Viper. Is the preferring the genial climate of France, to the fogs of your favourite iſle, any great matter of wonder? In ſhort, I like neither your country nor people.

Colonel. For which you have doubtleſs very good reaſons: but believe this as a truth, Mr Viper; no man ever yet deſerted his country, unleſs he had been firſt by his country deſerted.

Viper. Your are very partial, Colonel (for I know you), conſidering England as a ſpot to which you can never lay any claim.

Colonel. Why not?

Viper. Waſn't your father a rebel?

Colonel. True.

Viper. And are not you an officer in the ſervice of France?

Colonel. I was; but my preſent royal maſter, above the narrow prejudice of puniſhing the principles of parents in their unfortunate offſpring, has accepted my ſervice and reſtored my family to the rights of their country.

Clack. Well ſaid!

Sir Harry.

Sir Harry. Ay, and well done too! to reclaim by clemency is the nobleſt victory a monarch can gain over his ſubjects.

Min. But what can we do with this fellow? is there no method of puniſhing ſuch a—

Colonel. Let him alone; a gentleman of his particular turn can't long eſcape the prying eyes of the police in this town; and I promiſe you they ſha'n't want a key to his character.

Sir Harry. But, Colonel, I begin to ſuſpect that I too have been bit by this Viper; cou'dn't I ſtop him, juſt to make him account for—

Viper. Stop me? you had beſt take care of yourſelf: you forget a few obligations of yours I have in my pocket; which, as I find you are quitting this country, I ſhall endeavour to get better ſecured. [*Exit.*

Sir Harry. Now there is a raſcal!

Colonel. How came you to place any confidence in a man without the ſmalleſt recommendation?

Sir Harry. Lord, who could ſuppoſe that a countryman would impoſe upon—

Colonel. Your countrymen? the very laſt people, unleſs they are well known, you ſhould truſt or cheriſh in France.

Sir Harry. And why ſo?

Colonel. The neceſſity they lie under of ſhifting their quarters, is with but too many of them, their only reaſon for croſſing the Channel.

Min. Indeed?

Colonel. And I will venture to ſay, without the concurrence of ſome of theſe gentry, no conſiderable fraud has ever been committed upon our young giddy travellers in this part of the world.

Codl. Vaſt curus indeed! that ſhall go into my journal. "Obſerwation: The French who rob and cheat the Briſh ſubjects in Paris, are all of them Engliſh."

Mrs Min. Ay, ay; all birds of a feather. Let us go home and leave them, as faſt as we can. Well, Jenny, I hope there is an end of all thy vagaries: thee ſeeſt what premunirers thy wilfulneſs had near brought us into.

Clack. Nay, ſiſter, don't preſs the girl for the preſent: let Mr Codling continue his courtſhip; and, in time, I warrant, the girl will comply.

Codl.

Codl. Why, father-in-law that was to have been, it ſeems to me, and to ſay truth, from the ſamples I have had, before I ſettles I ſhould like to ſee a little more of the world.

Min. Nay, Mr Codling, you may do as you liſt; nobody wants to compel you.

Mrs Min. For the matter of that, if Dick Drugget's friends are inclined, they are well to paſs in the world; and who can tell, in the end, but one match may be as good as the other?

Codl. Why, as they are ſo vaſt fond of each other, I think it is the beſt ſtep you can take. For my part, I have made up my mind: I'll part with my ſhop, voyage round the world for the reſt of my life, and, like other great travellers, communicate my obſerwations for the good of my country.

THE END.

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